



By the author of CARRIE and SALEM'S LOT

STEPHEN KING

THE SHINING

Danny was only five years old but he could really shine. That's what Mr Halloran said and he should know: he'd seen quite a few shiners in his sixty-odd years and he could shine a little himself. But when Danny put out a thought it was as hard as a pistol. And he could pick up on thoughts too. He knew for instance that Daddy and Mummy had both thought the word DIVORCE though they hadn't mentioned it even to each other. And that was because of the Bad Thing that Daddy used to do that he had stopped doing.

Sometimes when Danny thought hard, Tony would come. Tony was his invisible friend. That's what he told Mummy and Daddy but he knew that Tony was real. He used to show Danny what would happen the next day or the next week, but lately Tony had been growing rather distant and the things he showed Danny were

(Continued on back flap)

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**THE
SHINING**

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SALEM'S LOT

THE SHINING

STEPHEN KING



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TIMES MIRRORED

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This is for Joe Hill King, who shines on.

My editor on this book, as on the previous two, was Mr. William G. Thompson, a man of wit and good sense. His contribution to this book has been large, and for it, my thanks.

S.K.

Some of the most beautiful
resort hotels in the world
are located in Colorado, but
the hotel in these pages
is based on none of them.
The Overlook and the people
associated with it exist
wholly within
the author's
imagination.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and when the hour was to be struck, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceeding strange, out of so peculiar a note and emphasis that at each lapse of an hour the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause to hearken to the sound, and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions, and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the gayest grew pale and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie or meditation. But when the echoes had fully ceased a light laugh or a once pervaded the assembly, and they smiled as if at their own nervousness and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next striking of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion, and then, after the lapse of six minutes there came yet another chiming of the clock, and again were the same disconcerting tremulousness and meditation as before.

But in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. . . .

E. A. Poe

"The Masque of the Red Death"

The sleep of reason breeds monsters.

Goya

It'll shine when it shines.

Folk saying

Introduction

STEPHEN KING

I think that in every writer's career—usually early in it—there comes a "crossroads novel," where the writer is presented with a choice: either do what you have done before, or try to reach a little higher. What you realize only in retrospect is how important that choice is. Sometimes the moment comes only once. For me, the crossroads novel was *The Shining*, and I did decide to reach. I can even remember the exact moment the choice came: It was when Jack Torrance, *The Shining's* flawed protagonist, is remembering his father, a drunken brute who abused his son mentally, physically and emotionally . . . all the ways it can be done, in other words.

Part of me wanted to describe the father's brutality and leave it at that. Surely, I thought, the book's readers would make the connection between Jack's relationship with his father and Jack's relationship with his own son, Danny, who is, of course, *The Shining's* psychic focal point.

Another part of me wanted to go deeper—to admit Jack's love of his father in spite of (perhaps even *because* of) his father's unpredictable and often brutal nature. That was the part I listened to, and it made a big difference to the novel as a whole. Instead of changing from a relatively nice guy into a two-dimensional villain driven by supernatural forces to kill his wife and son, Jack Torrance became a more realistic (and therefore more frightening) figure. A killer motivated to his crimes by supernatural forces was, it seemed to me, almost comforting once you got below the surface thrills provided by any halfway competent ghost story. A killer that might be doing it because of childhood abuse *as well as* those ghostly forces . . . ah, that seemed genuinely disturbing. Furthermore, it offered a chance to blur the line between the supernatural and the psychotic, to take my story into that I-hope-this-is-only-a-dream territory where the merely scary becomes outright horrifying. My single conversation with the late Stanley Kubrick, about six months before he commenced filming his version of *The Shining*, suggested that it was this quality about the story that appealed to him: What, exactly, is impelling Jack Torrance toward murder in the winter-isolated rooms and hallways of the Overlook Hotel? Is it undead people, or undead memories? Mr. Kubrick and I came to different conclusions (I *always* thought there were malevolent ghosts in the Overlook, driving Jack to the precipice), but perhaps those different conclusions are, in fact, the same. For aren't

memories the true ghosts of our lives? Do they not drive all of us to words and acts we regret from time to time?

The decision I made to try and make Jack's father a real person, one who was loved as well as hated by his flawed son, took me a long way down the road to my current beliefs concerning what is so blithely dismissed as "the horror novel." I believe these stories exist because we sometimes need to create unreal monsters and bogies to stand in for all the things we fear in our real lives: the parent who punches instead of kissing, the auto accident that takes a loved one, the cancer we one day discover living in our own bodies. If such terrible occurrences were acts of darkness, they might actually be easier to cope with. But instead of being dark, they have their own terrible brilliance, it seems to me, and none shine so bright as the acts of cruelty we sometimes perpetrate in our own families. To look directly at such brilliance is to be blinded, and so we create any number of filters. The ghost story, the horror story, the uncanny tale—all of these are such filters. The man or woman who insists there are no ghosts is only ignoring the whispers of his or her own heart, and how cruel that seems to me. Surely even the most malignant ghost is a lonely thing, left out in the dark, desperate to be heard.

None of these things occurred to me in coherent or even semi-coherent form when I was writing *The Shining* in my little study looking out toward the Flatirons; I had a story to write, my daily goal of

3,000 words to meet (I'm lucky if I can manage 1,800 a day in my sixth decade). All I knew was that I had a choice, either to make little Jacky's father a flat-out bad guy (which I could do in my sleep) or to try for something a little more difficult and complex: in a word, reality.

If I had been less well-fixed financially, I might well have opted for choice number one. But my first two books, *Carrie* and *Salem's Lot*, had been successful, and we Kings were doing okay in that regard. And I didn't want to settle for less when I sensed I could up the book's emotional ante considerably by making Jack Torrance a real character instead of just the Overlook's boogeyman.

The result wasn't perfect, and there is a cocky quality to some of *The Shining's* prose that has come to grate on me in later years, but I still like the book enormously, and recognize the importance of the choice it forced on me: between the safe unreality of the amusement park funhouse and the much more dangerous truths that lurk between the lines of the fantasy genre's more successful works. That truth is that monsters are real, and ghosts are real, too. They live inside us, and sometimes they win.

That our better angels sometimes—often!—win instead, in spite of all odds, is another truth of *The Shining*. And thank God it is.

New York City
February 8, 2001

PART ONE

Prefatory Matters

JOB INTERVIEW

Jack Torrance thought *Officious little prick.*

Ullman stood five-five and when he moved, it was with the prissy speed that seems to be the exclusive domain of all small plump men. The part in his hair was exact, and his dark suit was sober but comforting. I am a man you can bring your problems to, that suit said to the paying customer. To the hired help it spoke more curtly. This had better be good, you. There was a red carnation in the ape, perhaps so that no one on the street would mistake Stuart Ullman for the local undertaker.

As he listened to Ullman speak Jack admitted to himself that he probably could not have liked any man on that side of the desk—under the circumstances.

Ullman had asked a question he hadn't caught. That was bad, Ullman was the type of man who would file such lapses away in a mental Rolodex for later consideration.

"I'm sorry?"

"I asked if your wife fully understood what you would be taking on here. And there's your son, of course." He glanced down at the application in front of him. "Daniel. Your wife isn't a bit undated by the idea?"

"Wendy is an extraordinary woman."

"And your son is also extraordinary?"

Jack smiled, a big wide PR smile. "We like to think so, I suppose. He's quite self-reliant for a five-year-old."

No returning smile from Ullman. He slipped Jack's application back into a file. The file went into a drawer. The desk top was now completely bare except for a blotter, a telephone, a Tensor amp, and an in-out basket. Both sides of the in-out were empty too.

Ullman stood up and went to the file cabinet in the corner. "Step around the desk, if you will, Mr. Torrance. We'll look at the hotel floor plans."

He brought back five large sheets and set them down on the glossy walnut plain of the desk. Jack stood by his shoulder, very much aware of the scent of Ullman's cologne. *All my men wear English Leather or they wear nothing at all* came into his mind for no reason at all, and he had to clamp his tongue between his teeth to keep in a bray of laughter. Beyond the wall, faintly, came the sounds of the Overlook Hotel's kitchen, gearing down from lunch.

"Top floor," Ullman said briskly. "The attic. Absolutely nothing up there now but bric-a-brac. The Overlook has changed hands several times since World War II and it seems that each successive manager has put everything they don't want up in the attic. I want rattraps and poison bait sowed around in it. Some of the third-floor chambermaids say they have heard rustling noises. I don't believe it, not for a moment, but there must be even be that one-in-a-hundred chance that a single rat inhabits the Overlook Hotel."

Jack, who suspected that every hotel in the world had a rat or two, held his tongue.

"Of course you wouldn't allow your son up in the attic under any circumstances."

"No," Jack said, and flashed the big PR smile again. Humiliating situation. Did this officious little prick actually think he would allow his son to goof around in a rattrap attic full of junk furniture and God knew what else?

Ullman whisked away the attic floor plan and put it on the bottom of the pile.

"The Overlook has one hundred and ten guest quarters," he said in a scholarly voice. "Thirty of them, all suites, are here on the third floor. Ten in the west wing (including the Presidential Suite), ten in the center, ten more in the east wing. All of them command magnificent views."

Could you at least spare the saletask?

No, he kept quiet. He needed the job.

Ullman put the third floor on the bottom of the pile and they studied the second floor.

"Forty rooms," Ullman said, "thirty doubles and ten singles. And on the first floor, twenty of each. Plus three linen closets on each floor and a storeroom which is at the extreme east end of

the hotel on the second floor and the extreme west end on the first. Questions?"

Jack shook his head. Ullman whisked the second and first floors away.

"Now Lobby level. Here in the center is the registration desk. Behind it are the offices. The lobby runs for eighty feet in either direction from the desk. Over here in the west wing is the Overlook Dining Room and the Colorado Lounge. The banquet and ballroom facility is in the east wing. Questions?"

"Only about the basement," Jack said. "For the winter caretaker, that's the most important level of all. Where the action is, so to speak."

"Watson will show you all that. The basement floor plan is on the boiler room wall." He frowned impressively, perhaps to show that as manager, he did not concern himself with such mundane aspects of the Overlook's operation as the boiler and the plumbing. "Might not be a bad idea to put some traps down there too. Just a minute . . ."

He scrawled a note on a pad he took from his inner coat pocket (each sheet bore the legend *From the Desk of Stuart Ullman* in bold black script), tore it off and dropped it into the out basket. It sat there looking lonesome. The pad disappeared back into Ullman's jacket pocket like the conclusion of a magician's trick. Now you see it, Jacky-boy, now you don't. This guy is a real heavyweight.

They had resumed their original positions. Ullman behind the desk and Jack in front of it, interviewer and interviewee, supplicant and reluctant patron. Ullman folded his neat little hands on the desk blotter and looked directly at Jack, a small, balding man in a banker's suit and a quiet gray tie. The flower in his lapel was balanced off by a small lapel pin on the other side. It read simply STAFF in small gold letters.

"I'll be perfectly frank with you, Mr. Torrance. Albert Shockley is a powerful man with a large interest in the Overlook, which showed a profit this season for the first time in its history. Mr. Shockley also sits on the Board of Directors, but he isn't a hotel man and he would be the first to admit this. But he has made his wishes in this caretaking matter quite obvious. He wants you

here. I would do so. But if I had been given a free hand in this matter I would not have taken you in."

Jack's hands were clenched tightly in his lap, working against each other, sweating. *Officious little prick, officious little prick, officious—*

"I don't believe you care much for me, Mr. Torrance. I don't care. Certainly your feelings toward me play no part in my own belief that you are not right for the job. During the season that runs from May fifteenth to September thirtieth, the Overlook employs one hundred and ten people full-time, one for every room in the hotel. You might say I don't think many of them like me and I suspect that some of them think I'm a bit of a bastard. They would be correct in their judgment of my character. I have to be a bit of a bastard to run this hotel in the manner it deserves."

He looked at Jack for comment, and Jack flashed the PR smile again, large and insidiously toothy.

Ullman said, "The Overlook was built in the years 1907 to 1909. The closest town is Snowmass, forty miles east of here over roads that are closed from sometime in late October or November until sometime in April. A man named Robert Townley Watson built it, the grandfather of our present maintenance man. Vanderbly's have stayed here, and Rockefellers, and Astors, and Du Ponts. Four Presidents have stayed in the Presidential Suite: Wilson, Harding, Roosevelt, and Nixon."

"I wouldn't be too proud of Harding and Nixon," Jack murmured.

Ullman frowned but went on regardless. "It proved too much for Mr. Watson, and he sold the hotel in 1915. It was sold again in 1922, in 1932, in 1936. It stood vacant until the end of World War II, when it was purchased and completely renovated by H. race Derwent, millionaire inventor, plot film producer, and entrepreneur."

"I know the name," Jack said.

"Yes. Everything he touched seemed to turn to gold—except the Overlook. He financed over a million dollars in oil theft, the first postwar guest ever stepped through its doors, losing a fortune to a man who was a swindler. I was Derwent who added the name, and I saw you admiring when you arrived."

"Roque?"

"A British forebear of our croquet, Mr. Torrance. Croquet is bastardized roque. According to legend, Derwent learned the game from his social secretary and fell completely in love with it. Croquet may be the finest roque court in America."

"I wouldn't doubt it," Jack said gravely. A roque court a topiary full of hedge animals out front, what next? A life-sized Lincoln Wiggly game behind the equipment shed? He was getting very tired of Mr. Stuart Ullman, but he could see that Ullman wasn't done. Ullman was going to have his say, every last word of it.

"When he had lost three million, Derwent sold it to a group of California investors. Their experience with the Overlook was equally bad. Just not hotel people."

"In 1970, Mr. Shoghty and a group of his associates bought the hotel and turned its management over to me. We have also run in the red for several years, but I'm happy to say that the trust of the present owners in me has never wavered. Last year we broke even. And this year the Overlook's accounts were written in black ink for the first time in almost seven decades."

Jack supposed that this fussy, dilettante man's pride was satisfied, and then his original dislike washed over him again in a wave.

He said, "I see no connection between the Overlook's admittedly colorful history and your feeling that I'm wrong for the post, Mr. Ullman."

"One reason that the Overlook has lost so much money lies in the depreciation that occurs each winter. It shortens the profit margin a great deal more than you might believe, Mr. Torrance. The winters are fantastically cruel. In order to cope with the problem, I've installed a full-time winter caretaker, a man, the boiler and to heat different parts of the hotel in a fairly long house. To repair breakage as it occurs and to do repairs, so the elements can't get a foothold. I'm constantly alert to any and every contingency. During our first winter I hired a ~~landscaper~~ of a single man. There was a tragedy. A horrible tragedy."

Ullman looked at Jack, eyes wide open, surprised.

"I made a mistake. I didn't, freely. The man was a drunk."

Jack felt a slow, heavy grip, the total antithesis of the toothy PR grin stretch across his mouth. "Is that all? I'm surprised. At least tell me you've retired."

“Yes. Mr. Shockley told me you no longer drink. He also told me about your last job . . . your last position of trust, shall we say? You were teaching English in a Vermont prep school. You lost your temper. I don’t believe I need to be any more specific than that. But it do happen to believe that Grady’s case has a bearing, and that is why I have brought the matter of your . . . uh, previous history into the conversation. During the winter of 1971-72, after we had refurbished the Overlook but before our first season, I hired this . . . this unfortunate named Delbert Grady. He moved into the quarters you and your wife and son will be sharing. He had a wife and two daughters. I had reservations, the main ones being the harshness of the winter season and the fact that the Grady’s would be cut off from the outside world for five to six months.”

But that’s not really true . . . is it? There are telephones here and probably a citizen’s band radio as well. And the Rocky Mountain National Park is within helicopter range and surely a piece of ground that big must have a chopper or two.”

“I wouldn’t know about that, Ullman said. “The hotel does have a two-way radio that Mr. Watson will show you, along with a list of the correct frequencies to broadcast on if you need help. The telephone lines between here and Snowbird are still aboveground, and they go down almost every winter at some point or other and are apt to stay down for three weeks to a month and a half. There is a snowmobile in the equipment shed also.”

“Then the place really isn’t cut off.”

Mr. Ullman looked pained. “Suppose your son or your wife tripped on the stairs and fractured his or her skull, Mr. Torrance. Would you think the place was cut off then?”

Jack saw the point. A snowmobile running at top speed could get you down to Snowbird in an hour and a half . . . maybe. A helicopter from the Parks Rescue Service could get up here in three hours . . . under optimum conditions. In a blizzard it would never even be able to lift off and you couldn’t hope to run a snowmobile at top speed, even if you dared take a seriously injured person out into temperatures that might be twenty-five below or forty-five below, if you added in the wind-chill factor.

"In the case of Grady," Ullman said, "I reasoned much as Mr. Shockley seems to have done in your case. Solitude can be damaging in itself. Better for the man to have his family with him. If there was trouble, I thought, the odds were very high that it would be something less urgent than a fractured skull or an accident with one of the power tools or some sort of convulsion. A serious case of the flu, pneumonia, a broken arm, even appendicitis. Any of those things would have left enough time.

"I suspect that what happened came as a result of too much cheap whiskey of which Grady had laid in a generous supply, unbeknownst to me, and a curious condition which the old-timers call cabin fever. Do you know the term?" Ullman offered a patronizing little smile, ready to explain as soon as Jack admitted his ignorance, and Jack was happy to respond quickly and crisply.

"It's a slang term for the claustrophobic reaction that can occur when people are shut in together over long periods of time. The feeling of claustrophobia is externalized as dislike for the people you happen to be shut in with. In extreme cases it can result in hallucinations and violence—murder has been done over such minor things as a burned meal or an argument about whose turn it is to do the dishes."

Ullman looked rather nonplussed, which did Jack a world of good. He decided to press a little further, but sincerely promised Wendy he would stay cool.

"I suspect you did make a mistake at that. Did he hurt them?"

"He killed them, Mr. Torrance, and then committed suicide. He murdered the little girls with a hatchet, his wife with a shotgun, and himself the same way. His leg was broken. Undoubtedly so drunk he fell downstairs."

Ullman spread his hands and looked at Jack self-righteously.

"Was he a high school graduate?"

"As a matter of fact, he wasn't," Ullman said a little stiffly. "I thought, a, shall we say, less imaginative individual would be less susceptible to the rigors, the loneliness—"

"That was your mistake," Jack said. "A stupid man is more prone to cabin fever just as he's more prone to shoot someone over a card game or commit a spur-of-the-moment robbery. He gets bored. When the snow comes, there's nothing to do but watch

TV or play solitaire and cheat when he can't get all the aces out. Nothing to do but bitch at his wife and nag at the kids and creek. It gets hard to sleep because there's nothing to hear. So he drinks himself to sleep and wakes up with a hangover. He gets up. And maybe the telephone goes. At and the TV again slows down and there's nothing to do but think and cheat at solitaire and get edgier and edgier. Finally boom, boom, boom."

"Whereas a more educated man, such as yourself?"

"My wife and I both like to read. I have a play to work on, as Al Shockley probably told you. Danny has his puzzles, his coloring books, and his crystal radio. I plan to teach him to read, and I also want to teach him to snowshoe. Wendy would like to learn how, too. Oh yes, I think we can keep busy and out of each other's hair if the TV goes on theritz." He paused. "And Al was telling the truth when he told you I no longer creek. I did once, and it got to be serious. But I haven't had so much as a glass of beer in the last fourteen months. I don't intend to bring any alcohol up here, and I don't think there will be an opportunity to get any after the snow flies."

"In that you would be quite correct," Ullman said. "But as long as the three of you are up here the potential for problems is multiplied. I have told Mr. Shockley this, and he told me he would take the responsibility. Now I've told you, and apparently you are also willing to take the responsibility."

"I am."

"All right. I'll accept that, since I have a choice. But I would still rather have an unattached college boy taking a year off. Well, perhaps you'll do. Now I'll turn you over to Mr. Watson, who will take you through the basement and around the grounds. Unless you have further questions?"

"No. None at all."

Ullman stood. "I hope there are no hard feelings, Mr. Torrance. There is nothing personal in the things I have said to you. I only want what's best for the Overlook. It is a great hotel. I want it to stay that way."

"No. No hard feelings." Jack flashed the PR grin again, but he was glad Ullman didn't offer to shake hands. There were hard feelings. All kinds of them.

2

BOULDER

She looked out the kitchen window and saw him just sitting there on the porch, not playing with his trucks or the wagon or even the basketball that had pleased him so much all the last week since Jack had brought it home. He was just sitting there watching for their stepworm VW whose wheels planted on his thighs and his chin protruded in his hands, a five-year-old kid waiting for his daddy.

Wendy suddenly felt bad, a most crying bad.

She hung the dish towel over the bar by the sink and went downstairs, buttoning the top two buttons of her house dress. Jack and his prize *Hein*. *At I don't need an advance I'm okay for a while*. The bad words were gouged and marked with crayons, green pencil spray paint. The stairs were steep and splintery. The whole house smelled of sour acid and what sort of place was this for Danny after the small neat black house in Scrivener? The people living above them on the third floor weren't married and what she didn't like her but the cops and rancorous hitting did. It scared her. The guy up there was Tom, and after the bars had closed and they had returned home, the fights would start in earnest. The rest of the week was just a prelude in comparison. The Friday Night Fights Jack called them, but it wasn't funny. The woman's real name was Elaine, would at last be reduced to tears and to repeating over and over again, "Don't Tom Please don't Please don't." And he would shout at her. Once they had even awakened Danny and Danny slept like a corpse. The next morning Jack caught Tom going out and he'd spoken to him on the sidewalk at some length. Tom started to bluster and Jack had said something else to him, too quietly for Wendy to hear, and Tom had only shaken his head silently and walked away. That had been a week ago, and for a few days things had been better, but since the weekend things had been working back to normal - excuse me abnormal. It was bad for the boy.

Her sense of grief washed over her again but she was on the walk now and she smothered it. Sweeping her dress under her and sitting down on the curb beside him, she said "What's up, doc?"

He smiled at her but it was perfunctory. "H. Mom."

The glider was between his sneakered feet, and she saw that one of the wings had started to splinter.

"Want me to see what I can do with that, honey?"

Danny had gone back to staring up the street. "No. Dad will fix it."

"Your daddy may not be back until sappertime, doc. It's a long drive up into those mountains."

"Do you think the bug will break down?"

"No, I don't think so." But he had just given her something new to worry about. *Thanks Danny I needed that.*

"Dad said it might," Danny said in a matter-of-fact, almost bored manner. "He said the fuel pump was all shot to shit."

"Don't say that, Danny."

"Fuel pump?" he asked her with honest surprise.

She sighed. "No, 'All shot to shit.' Don't say that."

"Why?"

"It's vulgar."

"What's vulgar, Mom?"

"Like when you pick your nose at the table or pee with the bathroom door open. Or saying things like 'All shot to shit.' Shit is a vulgar word. Nice people don't say it."

"Dad says it. When he was looking at the bugmotor he said, 'Christ this fuel pump's all shot to shit.' Isn't Dad nice?"

How do you get into these things, Winnifred? Do you practice?

"He's nice, but he's also a grown-up. And he's very careful not to say things like that in front of people who wouldn't understand."

"You mean like Uncle Al?"

"Yes, that's right."

"Can I say it when I'm grown-up?"

"I suppose you will, whether I like it or not."

"How old?"

"How does twenty sound, doc?"

"That's a long time to have to wait."

"I guess it is, but will you try?"

"Hokay."

He went back to staring up the street. He flexed a little, as if to rise, but the beetle coming was much newer, and much brighter red. He relaxed again. She wondered just how hard his move to Colorado had been on Danny. He was closemouthed about it, but it bothered her to see him spending so much time by himself. In Vermont three of Jack's fellow factory members had had children about Danny's age, and there had been the preschool—but in this neighborhood there was no one for him to play with. Most of the apartments were occupied by students attending CU, and of the few married couples here on Arapahoe Street, only a tiny percentage had children. She had spotted perhaps a dozen of high school or junior high school age, three infants, and that was all.

"Mommy, why did Daddy lose his job?"

She was jolted out of her reverie and floundering for an answer. She and Jack had discussed ways they might handle just such a question from Danny, ways that had varied from evasion to the plain truth with no varnish on it. But Danny had never asked. Not until now, when she was feeling now and then prepared for such a question. Yet he was looking at her, maybe reading the confusion on her face and forming his own ideas about that. She thought that to children adult motives and actions must seem as bulking and ominous as dangerous animals seen in the shadows of a dark forest. They were jerked about like puppets, having only the vaguest notions why. The thought brought her dangerously close to tears again, and while she fought them off she leaned over, picked up the dish of ghider, and turned it over in her hands.

"Your daddy was coaching the debate team, Danny. Do you remember that?"

"Sure," he said. "Arguments for fun, right?"

"Right." She turned the ghider over and over, looking at the trade name (SPEEDOGAIDE) and the blue star decals on the wings, and found herself telling the exact truth to her son.

"There was a boy named George Haffield that Daddy had to cut from the team. That means he wasn't as good as some of the others. George said your daddy cut him because he didn't like him and not because he wasn't good enough. Then George did a bad thing. I think you know about that."

"Was he the one who put holes in our bug's tires?"

"Yes, he was. It was after school and your daddy caught him doing it." Now she hesitated again, but there was no question of evasion now; it was reduced to tell the truth or tell a lie.

"Your daddy . . . sometimes he does things he's sorry for later. Sometimes he doesn't think the way he should. That doesn't happen very often, but sometimes it does."

"Did he hurt George Hatfield like the time I spilled all his papers?"

Sometimes—

(Danny with his arm in a cast)

he does things he's sorry for later

Wendy blinked her eyes savagely hard, driving her tears all the way back.

"Something like that, honey. Your daddy hit George to make him stop cutting the trees and George hit his head. Then the men who are in charge of the school said that George couldn't go there anymore and your daddy couldn't teach there anymore." She stopped, out of words, and waited in dread for the deluge of questions.

"Oh," Danny said, and went back to looking up the street. Apparently the subject was closed. If only it could be closed that easily for her—

She stood up. "I'm going upstairs for a cup of tea, doc. Want a couple of cookies and a glass of milk?"

"I think I'll watch for Dad."

"I don't think he'll be home much before five."

"Maybe he'll be early."

"Maybe," she agreed. "Maybe he will."

She was halfway up the walk when he called, "Mommy?"

"What, Danny?"

"Do you want to go and live in that hotel for the winter?"

Now, which of five thousand answers should she give to that one? The way she had felt yesterday or last night or this morning? They were all different, they crossed the spectrum from rosy pink to dead black.

She said, "If it's what your father wants, it's what I want." She paused. "What about you?"

"I guess I do," he said finally. "Nobody much to play with around here."

"You miss your friends, don't you?"

"Some. I miss Scott and Andy. That's about all."

She went back to him and kissed him, ruffled his light-colored hair that was just losing its baby-fineness. He was such a solemn little boy, and sometimes she wondered just how he was supposed to survive with her and Jack for parents. The high hopes they had begun with came down to this unpleasant apartment building in a city they didn't know. The image of Danny in his cast rose up before her again. Somebody in the Divine Placement Service had made a mistake, one she sometimes feared could never be corrected and which only the most innocent bystander could pay for.

"Stay out of the road, doc," she said, and hugged him tight.

"Sure, Mom."

She went upstairs and into the kitchen. She put on the teapot and laid a couple of Oreos in a plate for Danny in case he decided to come up while she was lying down. Sitting at the table with her big pottery cup in front of her, she looked out the window at him, still slung on the curb in his blue jeans and his oversized dark green Stovington Prep sweat shirt, the glider now lying beside him. The tears which had threatened all day now came in a cloudburst and she leaned into the fragrant curling steam of the tea and wept. In grief and loss for the past, and terror of the future.

3

WATSON

You lost your temper, Lilman had said

"Okay, here's your furnace," Watson said, turning on a light in the dark, musty-smelling room. He was a beefy man with fluffy popcorn hair, white shirt, and dark green chinos. He swung open a small square grating in the furnace's belly and he and Jack peered in together. "This here's the pilot light." A steady blue-white jet hissing steadily upward channeled destructive force, but the key word, Jack thought, was *destructive* and not *channeled*.

If you stick your hand in there, the barbecue would happen in three quick seconds.

Lost your temper.

(Danny, are you all right?)

The furnace filled the entire room, by far the biggest and oldest Jack had ever seen.

"The place's got a foil safe," Watson told him. "If the sensor in there measures heat— if the heat falls below a certain point, it sets off a buzzer in your quarters. Hooter's on the other side of the wall. I'll take you around." He slammed the grating shut and led Jack behind the iron bulk of the furnace toward another door. The room radiated a stuporous heat at them, and for some reason Jack thought of a large d zing car. Watson fiddled his keys and whistled.

Lost your—

(When he went back into his study and saw Danny standing there, wearing nothing but his training pants and a grin, a slow, red cloud of rage had eclipsed Jack's reason. It had seemed slow subjectively inside his head but it must have all happened in less than a minute. It only seemed slow the way some dreams seem slow. The bad ones. Every door and drawer in his study seemed to have been ransacked in the time he had been gone. Closet, cupboards, the sliding bookcase. Every desk drawer yanked out to the stop. His manuscript, the three-act play he had been slowly developing from a novelette he had written seven years ago as an undergraduate, was scattered all over the floor. He had been drinking a beer and doing the Act II corrections when Wendy said the phone was for him, and Danny had poured the can of beer all over the pages. Probably to see it foam. *See it foam, see it foam*, the words played over and over in his mind like a single sick chord on an out-of-tune piano, completing the circuit of his rage. He stepped deliberately toward his three-year-old son, who was looking up at him with that pleased grin, his pleasure at the job of work so successfully and recently completed in Daddy's study. Danny began to say something and that was when he had grabbed Danny's hand and bent it to make him drop the typewriter eraser and the mechanical pencil he was clenching in it. Danny had cried out a little— no— no— tell the truth— he screamed. It was all hard to remember through the fog of anger, the sick single

thump of that one Spike Jones chord. Wendy somewhere, asking what was wrong. Her voice faint, damped by the river mist. This was between the two of them. He had whaled Danny around to spank him, his big adult fingers digging into the scant meat of the boy's forearm, meeting around it in a closed fist, and the snap of the breaking bone had not been loud, not loud but it had been very loud, *HUG!* but not loud. Just enough of a sound to cut through the red fog like an arrow—but instead of letting in sunlight, that sound set in the dark clouds of shame and remorse, the terror, the agonizing convulsion of the spirit. A clean sound with the past on one side of it and all the future on the other, a sound like a breaking pencil lead or a small piece of kindling when you brought it down over your knee. A moment of utter silence on the other side, in respect to the beginning future maybe, all the rest of his life. Seeing Danny's face drain of color until it was like cheese, seeing his eyes, always large, grow larger still, and guessing Jack sure the boy was going to faint dead away into the puddle of beer and papers, his own voice weak and drunk, still trying to take it all back, to find a way around that not too loud sound of bone cracking and into the past—*is there a status quo in the house?*—saying *Danny are you all right?* Danny's answering shriek, then Wendy's shocked gasp as she came around them and saw the peculiar angle Danny's forearm had to his elbow, no arm was meant to hang quite that way in a world of normal families. Her own scream as she swept him into her arms, and a nonsense babble—*Oh God Danny, oh dear God oh sweet God your poor sweet arm*—and Jack was standing there, stunned and stupid, trying to understand how a thing like this could have happened. He was standing there and his eyes met the eyes of his wife and he saw that Wendy hated him. It did not occur to him what the hate might mean in practical terms, it was only later that he realized she might have left him that night, gone to a motel, gotten a divorce, lowered in the morning, or called the police. He saw only that his wife hated him and he felt staggered by it all at once. He felt awful. This was what encountering death felt like. Then she fled for the telephone and dialed the hospital with the river in his boy wedged in the crook of her arm and Jack did not go after her, he only stood in the ruins of his life, some long beer and thinking—)

You lost your temper.

He rubbed his hand harshly across his lips and followed Watson into the boiler room. It was humid in here, but it was more than the humidity that brought the sick and salty sweat onto his brow and stomach and legs. The remembering did that, it was a total thing that made that night two years ago seem like two hours ago. There was no fog. It brought the shame and revulsion back, the sense of having no worth at all, and that feeling always made him want to have a drink, and the wanting of a drink brought a sick, blacker despair—would he ever have an hour, not a week or even a day, mind you, but just one waking hour when the craving for a drink wouldn't surprise him like this?

"The boiler," Watson announced. He pulled a red and blue bandanna from his back pocket, blew his nose with a decisive honk, and thrust it back out of sight after a short peek into it to see if he had gotten any bang interesting.

The boiler stood on four cement blocks, a long and cylindrical metal tank, copper-jacketed and often patched. It squatted beneath a confusion of pipes and ducts which zigzagged upward into the high, cobweb-testooned basement ceiling. To Jack's right, two large heat pipes came through the wall from the furnace in the adjoining room.

"Pressure gauge's here," Watson tapped it. "Pounds per square inch, psi. I guess you'd know that. I got her up to a hundred now, and the rooms get a little chilly at night. Few guests complain, what the fuck. They're crazy to come up here in September anyway. Besides, this is an old baby. Got more patches on her than a pair of welfare overalls." Out came the bandanna. A honk. A peek. Back it went.

"I got me a fuck'n cold," Watson said conversationally. "I get one every September. I be tinkering down here with this old whore, then I be muckin' the grass or rakin' that roque court. Get a cold and catch a cold, my old man used to say. God bless her, she been dead six year. The cancer got her. Once the cancer gets y'd, you might as well make your will."

"You want to keep your press up to no more than fifty, maybe sixty. Mr. Thompson says to heat the west wing one day, central wing the next, east wing the day after that. Ain't he a crazy man? I hate that little fucker. Yappy-pappy all the livelong day, he just like one of those little dogs that bites you on the

ankle then run around an pee all over the rug. If brains was black powder he couldn't blow his own nose. It's a p a y the things you see when you ain't got a gun.

"Look here. You open an close these ducks by pu in these rings. I got em ad marked for you. The blue tags all go to the rooms in the east wing. Red tags is the middle. Yellow is the west wing. When you go to heat the west wing, you got to remember that's the side of the hotel that real y catches the weather. When it whoops, those rooms get as cold as a fried woman with an ice cube up her works. You can run your press all the way to a p a y on west wing days. I would, anyway."

"The thermostats upstairs—" Jack began.

Watson shook his head vehemently, making his filthy hair brance on his skull. "They ain't hooked up. They're just here to show. Some of these people from California, they don't think things is right unless they got it hot enough to grow a p a y in their fuckin' bedroom. All the heat comes from down here. Come to watch the press, though. See her creep?"

He tapped the main dial, which had crept from a hundred pounds per square inch to a hundred and was, as Watson said, quized. Jack felt a sudden shiver cross his back in a hurry and thought: *The goose just walked over my grave.* Then Watson gave the pressure wheel a spin and dumped the boiler off. There was a great hissing, and the needle dropped back to ninety-one. Watson twisted the valve shut and the hissing died reluctantly.

"She creeps," Watson said. "You tell that fat little peckerwinded old man, he drags out the account books and spends three hours showing how we can't afford a new one until 1982. I tell you, this whole place is gonna go sky-high someday, and I just hope that fat fuck's here to ride the rocket. God, I wish I could be as charitable as my mother was. She used to see the goose in everything. Me, I'm just as mean as a snake with the shingles. What the fuck, a man can't help his nature."

"Now you got to remember to come down here twice a day and once at night, before you fuckin'. You got to check the press. If you forget, I'll just creep and creep and creep as long as you an your famb y'll wake up on the fuckin' moon. You got to dump her off a little and you'll have no trouble."

"What's top end?"

"Oh, she's rated for two-fifty, but she'd blow long before that now. You couldn't get me to come down and stand next to her when that dial was up to one hundred and eighty."

"There's no automatic shutdown?"

"No, there ain't. This was built before such things were required. Federal government's into everything these days, ain't it? FBI open a mail, CIA buggin' the goddam phones . . . and look what happened to that Nixon. Wasn't that a sorry sight?"

"But if you just come down here regular and check the press, you'll be fine. And remember to switch those ducks around like he wants. Won't none of the rooms get much above forty-five unless we have an amazing warm winter. And you'll have your own apartment just as warm as you like it."

"What about the plumbing?"

"Okay, I was just getting to that. Over here through this arch."

They walked into a long, rectangular room that seemed to stretch for miles. Watson pulled a cord and a single seventy-five-watt bulb cast a sickish, swinging glow over the area they were standing on. Straight ahead was the bottom of the elevator shaft, heavy greased cables descending to pulleys twenty feet in diameter and a huge, grease-clogged motor. Newspapers were everywhere, bundled and banded and boxed. Other cartons were marked *Records of Invoices or Receipts—SAVE!* The smell was yellow and molar. Some of the cartons were falling apart, spilling yellow flimsy sheets that might have been twenty years old out onto the floor. Jack stared around, fascinated. The Overlook's entire history might be here, buried in these rolling cartons.

"That elevator's a bitch to keep running," Watson said, jerking his thumb at it. "I know. Ullman's buying the state elevator inspector a few fancy dinners to keep the repairman away from that fucker."

"Now, here's your central plumbing core." In front of them five large pipes, each of them wrapped in insulation and cinched with steel bands, rose into the shadows and out of sight.

Watson pointed to a cobwebby shelf beside the utility shaft. There were a number of greasy rags on it, and a loose leaf binder. "That there is all your plumbing schematics," he said. "I don't think you'll have any trouble with clogs—never has been. But sometimes the pipes freeze up. Only way to stop that is to run the

four or a little bit during the nights, but there's over four hundred taps in this fuckin' palace. That fat fairy ups and would scream all the way to Denver when he saw the water bill. Ain't that right?"

"I'd say that's a remarkably astute analysis."

Watson looked at him admiringly. "Say you really are a college fella, aren't you? Talk just like a book. I admire that, as long as the fella ain't one of those fairy-boys. Lots of 'em are. You know who started up all those college riots a few years ago? The homosexuals, that's who. They get frustrated and have to cut loose. Comin' out of the closet, they call it. Holy shit, I don't know what the world's comin' to."

"Now, if she freezes, she most like you gonna freeze right up in this shaft. No heat, you see. If it happens, use this." He reached into a broken orange crate and produced a small gas torch.

"You just unstrap the insulation when you find the ice plug and put the heat right to her. Get it?"

"Yes. But what if a pipe freezes outside the building core?"

"That won't happen. If you're doing your job and keepin' the place heated. You can't get to the other pipes anyway. Don't you fret about it. You'll have no trouble. Beasly placed down here. Cobwebby. Gives me the horrors, it does."

"Ullman said the first winter caretaker killed his family and himself."

"Yeah, that guy Grady. He was a bad actor. I know that the minute I saw him. Always grinnin' like an egg-suck dog. That was when they were just startin' out here and that fat fuck Ullman, he was da hired the Boston Shangler if he'd've worked for minimum wage. Was a ranger from the Na'ama Park that found 'em, the phone was out. All of 'em up on the west wing on the third floor froze solid. I've had about the little girls. Eight and six, they was Cate as cat buttons. Oh, that was a hell of a mess. That Ullman, he manages some honky-tonky resort place down in Lake Tahoe in the off season, and he caught a plane up to Denver and hired a sleigh to take him up here from Sidewinder because the roads were closed. As a sleigh can you be eve' hat? He about spit a gut tryin' to keep it out of the papers. Did pretty well, I got to give him a tip. There was an item in the *Denver Post* once, of course the history in that pissant little rag they have down in Estes Park, but that was

just about a l. Pretty good, considering the reputation this place has got. I expected some reporter would dig it all up again and just smear out Grady in it as an excuse to make over the scandals."

"What scandals?"

Watson shrugged. "Any big hotels have got scandals," he said. "Just like every big hotel has got a ghost. Why? Hell, people come and go. Sometimes one of em will pop off in his room, heart attack or stroke or something like that. Hotels are superstitious places. No thirteen, no floor or room thirteen, no numbers on the back of the door you come in through, stuff like that. Why, we lost a lady just this last July. A woman had to take care of that, and you can bet your ass he did. That's what they pay him twenty-two thousand bucks a season for, and as much as I dislike the little prick, he earns it. I like some people just come here to throw up and they hire a guy like L. Man to clean up the messes. Here's this woman, must be sixty fuckin' years old, my age, and her hair's dyed just as red as a whore's stool, but it's saggin' just about down to her belly button on account of she ain't wearin' no brasserie, and a varycorse veins all up and down her legs so her walk's like a can-can. I got lamenesses, the veins down off her neck and arms and hangin' at her ears. And she's got this key with her, he can't be no more than seventeen, with hair down to his ass hole and his crotch begun like he stuffed it up with the funny pages. So they're here a week, ten days maybe, and every night's the same deal. Down in the Colorado Lounge from five to seven, her sackin' up Singapore Sings like they're gonna outlaw em tomorrow and him with just the one bottle of Olympia suckin' it, makin' it last. And she'd be makin' jokes and sayin' all these warty things, and every time she said one he'd grin just like a fuckin' ape, like she had a toes bed in the corners of his mouth. Only after a few days you could see it was gettin' harder and harder for him to grin, and you know what he had to think about to get his pump primed by himself. Well, he's down for dinner, him with a and her sittin' green drunk as a cost, you know, and he'd be pinchin' the waitress and grindin' it em when she wasn't lookin'. Hell, we can't hold on how long we can."

Watson shrugged.

Then he exhaled, and the night turned on him, his wife, it was a woman, she was passed out again, at every

other night they was there—and he's goin to get her some stomach medicine. So off he goes in the little Porsche they come in, and that's the last we see of him. Next morning she comes down and tries to put on this big act, but all day she's gettin paler an paler, and Mr. Ullman asks her sorta diplomatic like, would she like him to notify the state cops. Just in case maybe he had a little accident or something. She's on him like a cat. No-no-no, he's a fine driver, she isn't worried, everything's under control, he'll be back for dinner. So that afternoon she steps into the Colorado around three and never has no dinner at all. She goes up to her room around ten-thirty, and that's the last time anybody saw her alive."

"What happened?"

"County coroner said she took about thirty sleeping pills on top of all the booze. Her husband showed up the next day, some big-shot lawyer from New York. He gave old Ullman four different shades of boy hell. I'll sue this an I'll sue that an when I'm through you won't even be able to find a clean pair of underwear, stuff like that. But Ullman's good, the sucker. Ullman got him quieted down. Probably asked him higher how he'd like to see his wife splashed all over the New York papers. Wife of Prominent New York Bath Bath Found Dead With Breathtaking of Sleeping Pills. After paying hide-the-salam with a kid young enough to be her grandson.

"The state cops found the Porsche in back of this all-night burger joint down in Lyons, and Ullman pulled a few strings to get it released to that lawyer. Then both of them garged up on old Archer Houghton, which is the county coroner, and got him to change the verdict to accidental death. Heart attack. Now old Archer's driving a Chevy or I don't begin to know him. A man's got to take it where he finds it, especially when he starts getting on in years."

Out came the bandanna. Honk. Pick. Out. I sigh.

"So what happens? About a week later this stupid wife of a chambermaid, Deores Vukery by name, she gives out with a big lava shriek while she's makin up the room where those two stayed, and she faints dead away. When she comes to she says she seen the dead woman in the bathroom, lying gassed in the tub. 'Her face was all purple an puffy,' she says, 'an she was grinnin a

me ' So Ulman gave her two weeks' worth of walking papers and told her to get lost. I figure there's maybe forty-fifty people died in this hotel since my grandfather opened it for business in 1910."

He looked shrewdly at Jack.

"You know how most of em go? Heart attack or stroke, while they're bangin' the lady they're with. That's what these resorts get a lot of, old types that want one last fling. They come up here to the mountains to pretend they're twenty again. Sometimes something gives, and not all the guys who ran this place was as good as Ulman is at keepin' it out of the papers. So the Overlook's got a reputation, yeah. I'll bet the fuckin' *Biltmore* in New York City has got a reputation, if you ask the right people."

"But no ghosts?"

"Mr. Torrance, I've worked here all my life. I played here when I was a kid no older'n your boy in that wallet snapshot you showed me. I never seen a ghost yet. You want to come out back with me, I'll show you the equipment shed."

"Find."

As Watson reached up to turn off the light, Jack said, "There sure are a lot of papers down here."

"Oh, you're not kiddin'. Seems like they go back a thousand years. Newspapers and old invoices and bills or lading and Christ knows what else. My dad used to keep up with them pretty good when we had the old wood-burning furnace, but now they've got all out of hand. Some year I got to get a boy to haul them down to *Sidewinder* and burn em. If Ulman will stand the expense, I guess he will if I holler 'rat' loud enough."

"Then there are rats?"

"Yeah. I guess there's some. I got the traps and the poison Mr. Ulman wants you to use up in the attic and down here. You keep a good eye on your boy, Mr. Torrance. You wouldn't want nothin' to happen to him."

"No, I sure wouldn't." Coming from Watson the advice didn't sting.

They went to the stairs and paused there for a moment while Watson blew his nose again.

"You'll find all the tools you need out there and some you don't, I guess. And here's the shingles. Did Ulman tell you about that?"

"Yes, he wan's part of the west roof reshingled."

"He'll get ad the for free out of you that he can, the fat little prick, and then whine around in the spring about how you didn't do the job half right. I told him once right to his face. I said . . ."

Watson's words faded away to a comforting drone as they mounted the stairs. Jack Terrance looked back over his shoulder once into the impenetrable, musty-smelling darkness and thought that if there was ever a place that should have ghosts, this was it. He thought of Grady, locked in by the soft, implacable snow, going quietly berserk and committing his atrocity. Did they scream? he wondered. Poor Grady, feeling it close in on him more every day and knowing at last that for him spring would never come. He shouldn't have been here. And he shouldn't have lost his temper.

As he followed Watson through the door, the words echoed back to him like a knock, accompanied by a sharp snap like a breaking pencil lead. Dear God, he could use a drink. Or a thousand of them.

4

SHADOWLAND

Danny weakened and went up for his milk and cookies at quarter past four. He gobbled them while looking out the window, then went in to kiss his mother, who was lying down. She suggested that he stay in and watch "Sesame Street"—the time would pass faster—but he shook his head firmly and went back to his place on the curb.

Now it was five o'clock, and although he didn't have a watch and couldn't tell time too well yet anyway, he was aware of passing time by the lengthening of the shadows, and by the golden cast that now tinged the afternoon light.

Turning the glider over in his hands, he sang under his breath "Skip to my Lou, n I don't care . . . skip to my Lou, n I don't care . . . my master's gone away . . . Lou, Lou, skip to my Lou . . ."

They had sung that song a feather at the Jack and Jill Nursery School he had gone back in September. He didn't go to nursery school at home because Daddy couldn't afford to send him anywhere. He knew his mother and father worried about that, worried that it was asking for his loneliness and even more deeply unspoken between them, that Danny had lost her, but he didn't really want to go with the dead Jack and Jill anymore. It was for babies. He wasn't a baby anymore, but he wasn't a baby anymore. Big kids went to the big school and got a hot lunch. First grade. Next year. This year was a in-between between being a baby and a real kid. It was all right. He did miss Scott and Ann. Miss Scott, but it was still all right. It seemed best to wait a one for who ever might happen next.

He understood a great many things about his parents, and he knew that many times they didn't like his understanding and many other times refused to believe them. But someday they would have to believe. He was content to wait.

It was too bad they couldn't believe more, though especially at times like now. Mommy was lying on her bed in the apartment, still able to cry, though she was so worried about Daddy. Some of the things he was worried about were too grown up for Danny to understand, vague things that had to do with security with Daddy's feelings of power and anger and the fear of what was to become of them, but the two main things on her mind right now were that Daddy had had a breakdown in the mountains (her why doesn't he call?) or that Daddy had gone off to do the Bad Thing. Danny knew perfectly well what the Bad Thing was since Scotty Sampson, who was six months older, had explained it to him. Scotty knew because his daddy did the Bad Thing, too. Once. Scotty told him, his daddy had punched his mom right in the eye and knocked her down. Finally Scotty's dad and mom had gotten a divorce over the Bad Thing, and when Danny had known him, Scotty lived with his mother and only saw his daddy on weekends. The greatest terror of Danny's life was divorce, a word that always appeared in his mind as a sign printed in red letters which were covered with hissing poisonous snakes. In divorce your parents no longer lived together. They had a big of war over you in a court (tennis court? badminton court? Danny wasn't sure which or if it was some other, but Mommy and Daddy

had played both tennis and badminton at Stonington, so he assumed I could be either and you had to go with one of them and you practically never saw the other one and the one you were with could marry somebody you didn't even know if the urge came on them. The most terrifying thing about DAD was that he didn't sensed the word—or concept—or whatever I was but came to it in his understandings floating around in his own parent's heads, sometimes diffuse and relatively distant, sometimes as thick and obscuring and frightening as thunderheads. It had been that way after Daddy punished him for messing the papers up in his study and the doctor had to put his arm in a cast. That memory was already faded, but the memory of the DIVORCE thoughts was clear and terrifying. It had mostly been around his mommy that time and he had been in constant terror that she would pick the word from her brain and drag it out of her mouth making it real or worse. It was a constant undercurrent in their thoughts, one of the few he could always pick up, like the beat of some music. But like a beat, the central thought formed only the spine of more complex thoughts, thoughts he could not as yet even begin to interpret. They came to him only as colors and moods. Mommy's DIVORCE thoughts centered around what Daddy had done to his arm and what had happened at Stonington when Daddy lost his job. That boy. That George Haffid who got passed off at Daddy and put the holes in their bug's feet. Daddy's DIVORCE thoughts were more complex, colored dark violet and shot through with frightening veins of pure black. He seemed to think they would be better off if he left. That things would stop hurting. His daddy hurt almost all the time, mostly about the Bad Thing. Daddy could almost always pick that up too. Daddy's constant craving to go into a dark place and watch a color TV and eat peanuts out of a bowl and do the Bad Thing until his brain would be quiet and leave him alone.

But this afternoon his mother had no need to worry and he wished he could go to her and tell her that. The bug had not broken down. Daddy was not off somewhere doing the Bad Thing. He was almost home now, put-putting along the highway he wore Lyons and Boulder. For the moment his daddy wasn't even thinking about the Bad Thing. He was thinking about about about

Danny looked furtively behind him at the kitchen window

Sometimes thinking very hard made something happen to him. It made things real. Things go away and when he saw things that weren't there. Once, not long after they put the cross on his arm, this had happened at the supper table. They weren't talking much to each other then. But they were thinking. Oh yes. The thoughts of divorce hung over the kitchen table like a cloud full of black rain, pregnant, ready to burst. It was so bad he couldn't eat. The thought of eating with all that black divorce around made him want to throw up. And because it had seemed desperately important, he had thrown himself fully into concentration and something had happened. When he came back to real things, he was lying on the floor with beans and mashed potatoes in his lap and his mommy was holding him and crying and Daddy had been on the phone. He had been frightened, had tried to explain to them that there was nothing wrong, that this sometimes happened to him when he concentrated on understanding more than what normally came to him. He tried to explain about Tony, who they called his "invisible playmate."

His father had said, "He's having a He-Tony-Say-No-to. He seems okay, but I want the doctor to look at him all ways."

After the doctor left, Mommy had made him promise to never do that again, to never scare them that way, and Danny had agreed. He was frightened himself. Because when he had concentrated his mind, it had flown out to his daddy, and for just a moment before Tony had appeared (far away as he always did, calling distantly) and the strange things had boiled out their kitchen and the carved roast on the blue plate, for just a moment his own consciousness had plunged through his daddy's darkness to an incomprehensible word much more frightening than divorce and that word was suicide. Danny had never come across it again in his daddy's mind, and he had certainly not gone looking for it. He didn't care if he never found out exactly what that word meant.

But he did like to concentrate, because sometimes Tony would come. Not every time. Sometimes things just got woozy and swimmy for a minute and then cleared—most times, in fact. But at other times Tony would appear at the very limit of his vision, calling distantly and beckoning.

It had happened twice since they moved to Boulder, and he

remembered how surprised and pleased he had been to find Tony had followed him all the way from Vermont. So all his friends hadn't been left behind after all.

The first time he had been out in the back yard and nothing much had happened. Just Tony beckoning and then darkness and a few minutes later he had come back to real things with a few vague fragments of memory, like a jumbled dream. The second time, two weeks ago, had been more interesting. Tony, beckoning, calling from four yards over. "*Danny come see* . . ." It seemed that he was getting up, then falling into a deep hole, like Alice into Wonderland. Then he had been in the basement of the apartment house and Tony had been beside him, pointing into the shadows at the trunk his daddy carried all his important papers in, especially "THE PLAY."

"See?" Tony had said in his distant musical voice. "It's under the stairs. Right under the stairs. The movers put it right . . . under . . . the stairs."

Danny had stepped forward to look more closely at this marvel and then he was falling again this time out of the back yard swing, where he had been sitting all along. He had gotten . . . he wd knocked out of himself, too.

Three or four days later his daddy had been stomping around, telling Mommy furiously that he had been all over the goddam basement and the trunk wasn't there and he was going to sue the goddam movers who had left it somewhere between Vermont and Colorado. How was he supposed to be able to finish "THE PLAY" if things like this kept cropping up?

Danny said, "No, Daddy. It's under the stairs. The movers put it right under the stairs."

Daddy had given him a strange look and had gone down to see. The trunk had been there, just where Tony had shown him. Daddy had taken him aside, had sat him on his lap, and had asked Danny who let him down cellar. Had it been Tom from upstairs? The cellar was dangerous, Daddy said. That was why the door kept it locked. If someone was leaving it unlocked, Daddy wanted to know. He was glad to have his papers and his "PLAY" but it wouldn't be worth it to him, he said, if Danny fell down the stairs and broke his . . . his leg. Danny told his father earnestly that he hadn't been down in the cellar. That door was always locked. And

Mommy agreed. Danny never went down in the back hall, she said, because it was damp and dark and spidery. And he didn't tell lies.

"Then how did you know, doc?" Daddy asked.

"Tony showed me."

His mother and father had exchanged a look over his head. This had happened before, from time to time. Because it was frightening, they swept it quickly from their minds. But he knew they worried about Tony, Mommy especially, and he was careful about thinking the way that could make Tony come where she might see. But now he thought she was lying down, not moving about in the kitchen yet, and so he concentrated hard to see if he could understand what Daddy was thinking about.

His brow furrowed and his slightly grimy hands clenched into tight fists on his jeans. He did not close his eyes—that wasn't necessary—but he squinched them down to slits and imagined Daddy's voice, Jack's voice, John Daniel Torrance's voice—deep and steady, sometimes quarking up with amusement or deepening even more with anger or just staying steady because he was thinking. Thinking of Thinking about Thinking.

(thinking)

Danny sighed quietly and his body slumped on the curb as if all the muscles had gone out of it. He was fully conscious; he saw the street and the girl and boy walking up the sidewalk on the other side, holding hands because they were

(?in love?)

so happy about the day and themselves together in the day. He saw autumn leaves blowing along the gutter, yellow cartwheels of irregular shape. He saw the house they were passing and noticed how the roof was covered with

(shingles: i guess it'll be no problem if the flashing's ok yeah that'll be all right that wolson. christ what a character wish there was a place for him in "THE PLAY" i'll end up with the whole fucking human race in it if i don't watch out yeah shingles are there naps out there? oh sh: forgot to ask him well they're simple to get sidwinder hardware store wasps they're nesting this time of year i might want to get one of those bug bombs in case they're there when i rip up the old shingles new shingles old)

shingles. So that's what he was thinking about. He had gotten the job and was thinking about shingles. Danny didn't know who

Watson was, but everything else seemed clear enough. And he might get to see a wasps' nest. Just as sure as his name was

"Danny . . . Dannee . . ."

He looked up and there was Tony far up the street, standing by a stop sign and waving Danny as always. He felt a warm burst of pleasure at seeing his old friend, but this time he seemed to feel a prick of fear, too, as if Tony had come with some darkness hidden behind his back. A jar of wasps which when released would sting deeply.

But there was no question of not going.

He slumped further down on the curb, his hands sliding lazily from his thighs and dangling below the fork of his crotch. His chin sank onto his chest. Then there was a dim, painless tug as part of him got up and ran after Tony into tunneling darkness.

"Dannee—"

Now the darkness was shot with swirling whiteness. A coughing, whooping sound and bending, tortured shadows that resolved themselves into fir trees at night, being pushed by a screaming gale. Snow swirled and danced. Snow everywhere.

"Too deep," Tony said from the darkness, and there was a sadness in his voice that terrified Danny. "Too deep to get out."

Another shape loomed, rearing. Huge and rectangular. A sloping roof. Whiteness that was blurred in the stormy darkness. Many windows. A long building with a shingled roof. Some of the shingles were greener, newer. His daddy put them on. With nails from the Sidewinder hardware store. Now the snow was covering the shingles. It was covering everything.

A green witchlight glowed into being on the front of the building, flickered, and became a giant, grinning skull over two crossed bones.

"Poison," Tony said from the floating darkness. "Poison."

Other signs flickered past his eyes, some in green letters, some of them on boards stuck at leaning angles into the snowdrifts. NO SWIMMING. DANGER! LIVE WILES. THIS PROPERTY CONDEMNED. HIGH VOLTAGE. THIRD RAIL. DANGER OF DEATH. KEEP OFF. KEEP OUT. NO TRESPASSING. VIOLATORS WILL BE SHOT ON SIGHT. He understood none of them completely—he couldn't read—but got a sense of all, and a dreamy terror floated into the dark hollows of his body like light brown spores that would die in sunlight.

They faded. Now he was in a room filled with strange furniture,

a room that was dark. Snow spattered against the windows like thrown sand. His mouth was dry, his eyes like hot marbles, his heart triphammering in his chest. Outside there was a hollow booming noise, like a dreadful door being thrown wide. Footfalls. Across the room was a mirror, and deep down in its silver bubble a single word appeared in green fire and that word was REDRUM.

The room faded. Another room. He knew
(would know)

this one. An overturned chair. A broken window with snow swirling in already. It had frosted the edge of the rug. The drapes had been pulled free and hung on their broken rod at an angle. A low cabinet lying on its face.

More hollow booming noises, steady, rhythmic, horrible. Smashing glass. Approaching destruction. A hoarse voice, the voice of a madman, made the more terrible by its familiarity.

Come out! Come out, you little shut! Take your medicine!

Crash. Crash. Crash. Splintering wood. A belch of rage and satisfaction. REDRUM. Coming.

Drifting across the room. Pictures torn off the walls. A record player

(?Mommy's record player?)

overturned on the floor. Her records, Grieg, Handel, the Beatles, Art Gurfunkel, Bach, Liszt, thrown everywhere. Broken into jagged black pie wedges. A shaft of light coming from another room, the bathroom, harsh white light and a word flickering on and off in the medicine cabinet mirror like a red eye, REDRUM, REDRUM, REDRUM—

"No," he whispered. "No, Tony please—"

And, dangling over the white porcelain lip of the bathtub, a hand. Lamp. A slow trickle of blood (REDRUM) trickling down one of the fingers, the third, dripping onto the tile from the carefully shaped nail—

No oh no oh no—

(oh please, Tony, you're scaring me)

REDRUM REDRUM REDRUM

(stop it, Tony, stop it)

Fading.

In the darkness the booming noises grew louder, louder still, echoing, everywhere, all around.

And now he was crouched in a dark hallway, crouched on a blue rug with a riot of twisting black shapes woven into its pile, listening to the booming noises approach, and now a Shape turned the corner and began to come toward him, lurching, smeared of blood and doom. It had a mallet in one hand and it was swinging it (REDRUM) from side to side in vicious arcs, slamming it into the walls, cutting the silk wallpaper and knocking out ghostly bursts of plasterdust:

Come on and take your medicine! Take it like a man!

The Shape advancing on him, reeking of that sweet-sour odor, gigantic, the mallet head cutting across the air with a wicked hissing whisper, then the great hollow boom as it crashed into the wall, sending the dust out in a puff you could smell, dry and stchy. Tiny red eyes glowed in the dark. The monster was upon him, it had discovered him, cowering here with a blank wall at his back. And the trapdoor in the ceiling was locked.

Darkness. Drifting.

"Tony, please take me back, please, please—"

And he was back, sitting on the curb of Arapahoe Street, his shirt sticking damply to his back, his body bathed in sweat. In his ears he would still hear that huge, contrapuntal booming sound and smell his own urine as he voided himself in the extremity of his terror. He could see that limp hand dangling over the edge of the tub with blood running down one finger, the third, and that inexplicable word so much more horrible than any of the others REDRUM.

And now sunshine. Real things. Except for Tony, now six blocks up, only a speck, standing on the corner, his voice faint and high and sweet. "Be careful, doc . . ."

Then, in the next instant, Tony was gone and Daddy's battered red bug was turning the corner and chattering up the street, farting blue smoke behind it. Danny was off the curb in a second, waving, iving from one foot to the other, yelling "Daddy! Hey, Dad! Hi! Hi!"

His daddy swung the VW into the curb, killed the engine, and opened the door. Danny ran toward him and then froze, his eyes widening. His heart crawled up into the middle of his throat and froze so id. Beside his daddy, in the other front seat, was a short-handled mallet, its head clotted with blood and hair.

Then it was just a bag of groceries

"Danny . . . you okay, doc?"

"Yeah. I'm okay." He went to his daddy and buried his face in Daddy's sheepskin-lined denim jacket and hugged him tight tight tight. Jack hugged him back, slightly bewildered.

"Hey, you don't want to sit in the sun like that, doc. You're drippin' sweat."

"I guess I feel asleep a little. I love you, Daddy. I been waiting."

"I love you too, Dan. I brought home some stuff. Think you're big enough to carry it upstairs?"

"Sure am!"

"Doc Ferrance, the world's strongest man," Jack said, and ruffled his hair. "Whose hobby is falling asleep on street corners."

Then they were walking up to the door and Mommy had come down to the porch to meet them and he stood on the second step and watched them kiss. They were glad to see each other. Love came out of them the way love had come out of the boy and girl walking up the street and holding hands. Danny was glad.

The bag of groceries—just a bag of groceries—cracked in his arms. Everything was all right. Daddy was home. Mommy was loving him. There were no bad things. And not everything Tony showed him always happened.

But fear had settled around his heart, deep and dreadful, around his heart and around that indecipherable word he had seen in his spirit's mirror.

5

PHONEBOOTH

Jack parked the VW in front of the Rexall in the Table Mesa shopping center and let the engine die. He wondered again if he shouldn't go ahead and get the fuel pump replaced, and told himself again that they couldn't afford it. If the little car could keep running until November, it could retire with full honors anyway. By November the snow up there in the mountains would be higher

than the beetle's roof . . . maybe higher than three beetles stacked on top of each other

"Want you to stay in the car, doc. I'll bring you a candy bar."

"Why can't I come in?"

"I have to make a phone call. It's private stuff."

"Is that why you didn't make it at home?"

"Check."

Wendy had insisted on a phone in spite of their unraveling finances. She had argued that with a small child—especially a boy like Danny—who sometimes suffered from fainting spells, they couldn't afford not to have one. So Jack had forked over the thirty-dollar installation fee, had enough, and a ninety-dollar security deposit, which really hurt. And so far, the phone had been mine except for two wrong numbers.

"Can I have a Baby Ruth, Daddy?"

"Yes. You sit still and don't play with the gearshift, right?"

"Right. I'll look at the maps."

"You do that."

As Jack got out, Danny opened the bug's glovebox and took out the five bar-coded gas station maps: Colorado, Nebraska, Iowa, Wyoming, New Mexico. He loved road maps, loved to trace where the roads went with his finger. As far as he was concerned, new maps were the best part of moving West.

Jack went to the drugstore counter, got Danny's candy bar, a newspaper, and a copy of the October *Stetson's Digest*. He gave the girl a five and asked for his change in quarters. With the silver in his hand, he walked over to the telephone booth by the key-making machine and slipped inside. From here he could see Danny in the bug through three seas of glass. The boy's head was bent studiously over his maps. Jack felt a wave of nearly desperate love for the boy. The emotion showed on his face as a stony grimace.

He supposed he could have made this obligatory thank-you call to A. from home; he certainly wasn't going to say anything Wendy would object to. It was his pride that said no. These days he almost always listened to what his pride told him to do, because along with his wife and son, six hundred dollars in a checking account and one weary 1968 Volkswagen, his pride was all that was left. The only thing that was his. Even the checking account was

joint. A year ago he had been teaching English in one of the finest prep schools in New England. There had been friends—although not exactly the same ones he'd had before going on the wagon—some laughs, some faculty members who admired his deft touch in the classroom and his private dedication to writing. Things had been very good six months ago. And at once there was enough money left over at the end of each two-week pay period to start a little savings account. In his drinking days there had never been a penny left over, even though Al Shockley had stood a great many of the rounds. He and Wendy had begun to talk cautiously about finding a house and making a down payment in a year or so. A farmhouse in the country, take six or eight years to renovate it completely: what the hell, they were young, they had time.

Then he had lost his temper.

George Hatfield.

The smel of hope had turned to the smel of old leather in Crommert's office, the whole thing like some scene from his own play: the old prints of previous Stovington headmasters on the walls, steel engravings of the school as it had been in 1879, when it was first built and in 1895, when Vanderbilt money had enabled them to build the field house that still stood at the west end of the soccer field, squat, immense, dressed in ivy. April ivy had been rustling outside Crommert's slit window and the drowsy sound of steam heat came from the radiator. It was no set, he remembered thinking. It was real. His life. How could he have fucked it up so badly?

"This is a serious situation, Jack. Terribly serious. The Board has asked me to convey its decision to you."

The Board wanted Jack's resignation and Jack had given it to them. Under different circumstances, he would have gotten it out that June.

What had followed that interview in Crommert's office had been the darkest, most dreadful night of his life. The wanting, the need—me to get drunk had never been so bad. His hands shook. He knocked things over. And he kept wanting to take it out on Wendy and Denny. His temper was like a vicious animal on a frayed leash. He had left the house in terror that he might strike them. Had ended up outside a bar, and the only thing that had kept him from going in was the knowledge that if he did, Wendy

would leave him at last, and take Danny with her. He would be dead from the day they left.

Instead of going into the bar where dark shadows sat sipping the tasty waters of oblivion, he had gone to Al Shockley's house. The Board's vote had been six to one. Al had been the one.

Now he dialed the operator and she told him that for a dollar eighty-five he could be put in touch with Al two thousand miles away for three minutes. Time is relative, baby, he thought and struck an eight quarters. Faintly he could hear the electronic bongs and beeps of his connection sailing its way eastward.

Al's father had been Arthur Longley Shockley, the steel baron. He had left his only son, Albert, a fortune and a huge range of investments and directorships and chairs on various boards. One of these had been on the Board of Directors for Stuyvesant Preparatory Academy, the old man's favorite charity. Both Arthur and Albert Shockley were alumni and Albert lived in Barre, close enough to take a personal interest in the school's affairs. For several years Al had been Stuyvesant's tenth coach.

Jack and Al had become friends in a completely natural and unforced way. At the many school and faculty functions they attended together, they were always the two drunkest people there. Shockley was separated from his wife and Jack's own marriage was skidding slowly downhill, although he still loved Wendy and had promised sincerely (and frequently) to reform, for her sake and for baby Danny's.

The two of them went on from many faculty parties, hating the bars until they closed, then stopping at some mom'n pop store for a case of beer they would drink parked at the end of some back road. There were mornings when Jack would stumble into their leased house with dawn seeping into the sky and find Wendy and the baby asleep in the cradle. Danny always on the inside, a tiny fist curled under the shelf of Wendy's jaw. He would look at them and the self-loathing would back up his throat in a bitter wave even stronger than the rise of beer on his gullet and martini—martinis, as Al called them. Those were the times that his mind would turn thoughtfully and sanely to the grip of the rope or the razor blade.

If the banter had occurred on a weekday, he would sleep for three hours, get up, dress, chew four Exeders, and go off to

ten in his pipe a black American Doc's still drunk. Could make no sense, the Red-necked Wendell is going to tell you about how Longest was his wife in the bog fire.

He even he even he was an alcoholic Jack thought as A's took him home in his car. The classes he had missed or thought forgotten a peeking of last night's marians. Not me I can stop anytime. The night's he and Wendy had passed in separate beds. Listen, I'm fine. Mexican leaders. Sure I'm okay to drive. The tears she always shed in the bathroom. Cautious looks from his colleagues at any party where alcohol was served, even wine. The slowly turning red stain that he was being talked about. The knowledge that he was producing nothing at his fingers and had built up mostly black paper that ended up in the wastebasket. He had been searching for a catch for Stoughton, a slowly burning American writer perhaps, and certainly a man well qualified to teach that great very creative writing. He had published two dozen short stories. He was working on a play, and thought there might be a novel. He was in some men's back room. But now he was not producing and his teaching had become erratic.

It had finally ended one night less than a month after Jack had broken his son's arm. That it seemed to him had ended his marriage. All that remained was for Wendy to gather her way. If her mother hadn't been such a grace A bitch, he knew, Wendy would have taken a bus back to New Hampshire as soon as Danny had been okay to travel. It was over.

It had been a pale past midnight. Jack and A. were coming into Harte on U.S. 31. All behind the wheel of his Jig, shifting fancy on the curves, sometimes crossing the divide yellow line. They were both very drunk, the marians had linked that night in force. They came around the last curve before the bridge at seventy and A's bike came to a halt and the sharp burst squealing as rubber shredded from the Jig's tires. Jack remembered seeing A's face coming over the steering wheel like a round white moon. Then the engine came second as he hit the bike at forty and it had the whip like a bent and twisted bird the handlebars coming in a flash and then it was in the air. Jack saw the store's face pass in front of Jack's bulging eyes. A moment later he heard the final dreadful smash as it

landed on the road behind them. Something thumped underneath them as the tires passed over it. The Jag drifted around broadside, Al studiously locking the wheel, and from far away Jack heard himself saying "Jesus, Al. We ran him down. I felt it."

In his ear the phone kept ringing. *Come on, Al. Be home. Let me get this over with.*

Al had brought the car to a smoking halt not more than three feet from a bridge stanchion. Two of the Jag's tires were flat. They had left zigzagging strips of burned rubber for a hundred and thirty feet. They looked at each other for a moment and then ran back in the cold darkness.

The bike was completely ruined. One wheel was gone and looking back over his shoulder Al had seen it lying in the middle of the road, half a dozen spokes sticking up like piano wire. Al had said hesitantly "I think that's what we ran over. Jacky-boy."

"Then where's the kid?"

"Did you see a kid?"

Jack frowned. It had all happened with such crazy speed. Coming around the corner. The bike looming in the Jag's headlights. Al veering something. Then the collision and the long skid.

They moved the bike to one shoulder of the road. Al went back to the Jag and put on its four-way flashers. For the next two hours they searched the sides of the road, using a powerful four-cell flashlight. Nothing. Although it was late, several cars passed the beached Jaguar and the two men with the hobbling flashlight. None of them stopped. Jack thought later that some queer providence, bent on giving them both a last chance, had kept the cops away, had kept any of the passers-by from colling them.

At quarter past two they returned to the Jag, sober but queasy. "If there was nobody riding it, what was it doing in the middle of the road?" Al demanded. "It wasn't parked on the side, it was right in the fucking middle!"

Jack could only shake his head.

"Your party does not answer," the operator said. "Would you like me to keep on trying?"

"A couple more rings, operator. Do you mind?"

"No, sir," the voice said dutifully.

Come on, Al!

Al hadiked across the bridge to the nearest pay phone, called

a bachelor friend and told him it would be worth fifty dollars if the friend would get the Jag's snow tires out of the garage and bring them down to the Highway 31 bridge outside of Barre. The friend showed up twenty minutes later wearing a pair of cabs and his pajama top. He surveyed the scene.

"Kill anybody?" he asked.

Al was already packing up the back of the car and Jack was loosening Jag nuts. "Provisionally, no one," Al said.

"I think I'll just head on back anyway. Pay me in the morning."

"Fine," Al said without looking up.

The two of them had gotten the tires on without incident, and together they drove back to Al Shockley's house. Al put the Jag in the garage and killed the motor.

In the dark quiet he said, "I'm off drinking. Jacky-boy. It's all over. I've slain my last martian."

And now, sweating in this phonebooth, it occurred to Jack that he had never doubted Al's ability to carry through. He had driven back to his own house in the VW with the radio turned up, and some disco group chanted over and over again: talismanic in the house before dawn. *Do it anyway. you wanta do it. do it anyway you want.* No matter how loud he heard the squealing tires, the crash. When he blinked his eyes shut, he saw that angle crushed wheel with its broken spokes pointing at the sky.

When he got in, Wendy was asleep on the couch. He looked in Danny's room and Danny was in his crib on his back, sleeping deeply, his arm still buried in the cast. In the softly filtered glow from the streetlight outside he could see the dark lines on his plastered whiteress where all the doctors and nurses in pediatrics had signed it.

It was an accident. He fell down the stairs.

(o you dirty liar)

It was an accident. I lost my temper.

(you fucking drunken waste god wiped snot out of his nose and that was you)

Listen hey come on please just an accident.

But the last piece was driven away by the image of that bobbing flashlight as they hunted through the dry late November weeds, looking for the sprawled body that by all good rights should have

been there, waiting for the police. It didn't matter that A had been driving. There had been other nights when he had been driving.

He pulled the covers up over Danny, went into Jean's bedroom, and took the Spanish Llama 38 down from the top shelf of the closet. It was in a shoe box. He sat on the bed with it for nearly an hour, looking at it, fascinated by its deadly shine.

It was dawn when he put it back in the box and put the box back in the closet.

That morning he had called Bruckner, the department head, and told him to please post his classes. He had the flu. Bruckner agreed, with less good grace than was common. Jack Torrance had been extremely susceptible to the flu in the last year.

Wendy made him scrambled eggs and coffee. They ate in silence. The only sound came from the back yard, where Danny was gleefully running his trucks across the sand pile with his good hand.

She went to do the dishes. Her back to him, she said: "Jack, I've been thinking."

"Have you?" He lit a cigarette with trembling hands. No hang-over this morning, oddly enough. Only the shakes. He blinked. In the instant's darkness the bike flew up against the windshield, starting the glass. The tires shrieked. The flashlight hobbled.

"I want to talk to you about . . . about what's best for me and Danny. For you too, maybe. I don't know. We should have talked about it before, I guess."

"Would you do something for me?" he asked, looking at the wavering tip of his cigarette. "Would you do me a favor?"

"What?" Her voice was dull and neutral. He looked at her back.

"Let's talk about it a week from today. If you still want to."

Now she turned to him, her hands icy with suds, her pretty face pale and disillusioned. "Jack, promises don't work with you. You just go right on with—"

She stopped, looking in his eyes, fascinated, suddenly uncertain.

"In a week," he said. His voice had lost all its strength and dropped to a whisper. "Please, I'm not promising anything. If you still want to talk then, we'll talk. About anything you want."

They looked across the window then at each other for a long time, and when she turned back to the dishes without saying anything more, he began to sadder. God, he needed a drink. Just a little pick-me-up to put things in their true perspective.

Danny said he dreamed you had a car accident," she said abruptly. "He has funny dreams sometimes. He said it this morning, when I got him dressed. Did you, Jack? Did you have an accident?"

"No."

By noon the craving for a drink had become a now-grade fever. He went to Al's.

"You cry?" Al asked, before letting him in. Al looked horrible.

"Bone dry. You look like Lon Chaney in *Phantom of the Opera*."

"Come on in."

They played two-handed whist all afternoon. They didn't drink.

A week passed. He and Wendy didn't speak much. But he knew she was watching, not believing. He drank coffee black and endless cans of Coca-Cola. One night he drank a whole six-pack of Coke and then ran into the bathroom and vomited it up. The level of the bottles in the liquor cabinet did not go down. After his classes he went over to Al Shockley's—she hated Al Shockley worse than she had ever hated anyone—and when he came home she would swear she smelled scotch or gin on his breath, but he would talk lucidly to her before supper, drink coffee, play with Danny after supper, sharing a Coke with him, read him a bedtime story, then sit and correct themes with cup after cup of black coffee by his hand, and she would have to admit to herself that she had been wrong.

Weeks passed and the unspoken word retreated further from the back of her lips. Jack sensed its retirement but knew it would never retire completely. Things began to get a little easier. Then George Hatfield. He had lost his temper again, this time stone sober.

"Sir, your party still doesn't—"

"Hello?" Al's voice, out of breath.

"Go ahead," the operator said dourly.

"Al, this is Jack Torrance."

"Jacky-boy." Genuine pleasure. "How are you?"

"Good. I just called to say thanks. I got the job. It's perfect. If I can't finish that goddam play snowed in all winter, I'll never finish it."

"You'll finish."

"How are things?" Jack asked hesnantly.

"Dry," Al responded. "You?"

"As a bone."

"Miss it much?"

"Every day."

Al laughed. "I know that scene. But I don't know how you stayed dry after that Hatfield thing, Jack. That was above and beyond."

"I really bitched things up for myself," he said evenly.

"Oh, hell. I'll have the Board around by spring. Effinger's already saying they might have been too hasty. And if that play comes to something—"

"Yes. Listen, my boy's out in the car, Al. He looks like he might be getting restless—"

"Sure. Understand. You have a good winter up there, Jack. Glad to help."

"Thanks again, Al." He hung up, closed his eyes in the hot booth, and again saw the crashing bike, the bobbing flashlight. There had been a squib in the paper the next day, no more than a space-filler really, but the owner had not been named. Why it had been out there in the night would always be a mystery to them, and perhaps that was as it should be.

He went back out to the car and gave Danny his slightly melted Baby Ruth.

"Daddy?"

"What, doc?"

Danny hesitated, looking at his father's abstracted face.

"When I was waiting for you to come back from that hotel, I had a bad dream. Do you remember? When I fell asleep?"

"Um-hm."

But it was no good. Daddy's mind was someplace else, not with him. Thinking about the Bad Thing again.

(I dreamed that you hurt me, Daddy.)

"What was the dream, doc?"

"Nothing," Danny said as they pulled out into the parking lot. He put the maps back into the glove compartment.

"You sure?"

"Yes."

Jack gave his son a faint, troubled glance, and then his mind turned to his play.

6

NIGHT THOUGHTS

Love was over and her man was sleeping beside her.

Her man.

She smiled a little in the darkness, his seed still trickling with slow warmth from between her slightly parted thighs, and her smile was both rueful and pleased, because the phrase *her man* summoned up a hundred feelings. Each feeling examined alone was a bewilderment. Together, in this darkness floating to sleep, they were like a distant blues tune heard in an almost deserted night club, melancholy but pleasing.

Lovin' you baby, is just like rollin' off a log,

But if I can't be your woman, I sure can't goin' to be your dog.

Had that been Billie Holiday? Or someone more prosaic like Peggy Lee? Didn't matter. It was low and torchy, and in the silence of her head it played mellowly, as if issuing from one of those old-fashioned jukeboxes, a Wurlitzer, perhaps, half an hour before closing.

Now, moving away from her consciousness, she wondered how many beds she had slept in with this man beside her. They had met in college and had first made love in his apartment—that had been less than three months after her mother drove her from the house, told her never to come back, that if she wanted to go somewhere she could go to her father since she had been responsible for the divorce. That had been in 1970. So long ago? A se-

master later they had moved in together had found jobs for the summer, and had kept the apartment when their senior year began. She remembered that bed the most clearly, a big double that sagged in the middle. When they made love, the rusty box spring had counted the beats. That fall she had finally managed to break from her mother. Jack had helped her. She wants to keep beating you. Jack had said. The more times you phone her, the more times you crawl back begging forgiveness, the more she can beat you with your father. It's good for her, Wendy, because she can go on making believe it was your fault. But it's not good for you. They had talked it over again and again in that bed, that year.

(Jack sitting up with the covers pooled around his waist, a cigarette burning between his fingers, looking her in the eye—he had a half-humorous, half-scowling way of doing that, telling her *She told you never to come back, right? Never to darken her door again, right? Then why doesn't she hang up the phone when she knows it's you? Why does she only tell you that you can't come in if I'm with you? Because she thinks I might cramp her style a little bit. She wants to keep putting the thumbscrews right to you, baby. You're a fool if you keep letting her do it. She told you never to come back, so why don't you take her at her word? Give it a rest. And at last she'd seen it his way.*)

It had been Jack's idea to separate for a while—to get perspective on the relationship, he said. She had been afraid he had become interested in someone else. Later she found it wasn't so. They were together again in the spring and he asked her if she had been to see her father. She had jumped as if he'd struck her with a quirt.

How did you know that?

The Shadow knows.

Have you been spying on me?

And his impatient laughter, which had always made her feel so awkward—as if she were eight and he was able to see her motivations more clearly than she.

You needed time, Wendy.

For what?

I guess . . . to see which one of us you wanted to marry.

Jack, what are you saying?

I think I'm proposing marriage.

The wedding. Her mother had been there, her mother had not been. She discovered she could live with that. I see that Jack. Then Danny had come, her fine son.

That had been the best year, the best bed. After Danny was born, Jack had gotten her a job typing for half a dozen English Department professor-quizzes, exams, class syllabi, study notes, reading lists. She ended up typing a novel for one of them, a novel that never got published. Much to Jack's very reverent and very private glee. The job was good for forty a week, and skirt skirted all the way up to sixty during the two months she spent typing the unsuccessful novel. They had their first car, a five-year-old Buick with a baby seat in the middle. Bright upwardly mobile young marrieds. Danny forced a reconciliation between her and her mother, a reconciliation that was always tense and never happy, but a reconciliation that was always the same. When she took Danny to the house, she went with Jack. And she didn't tell Jack that her mother always remind Danny's diaper, frowned over his formula, could always spot the accusatory first signs of a rash on the baby's bottom or privates. Her mother never said anything overtly, but the message came through anyway: the price she had begun to pay (and maybe always would) for the reconciliation was the feeling that she was an inadequate mother. It was her mother's way of keeping the thumbscrews handy.

During the days Wendy would stay home and housewife: feeding Danny his bottles in the sunwashed kitchen of the four-room second-story apartment, playing her records on the hattered portable stereo she had had since high school. Jack would come home at three (or at two if he felt he could cut his last class), and while Danny slept he would lead her into the bedroom and fears of inadequacy would be erased.

At night while she typed, he would do his writing and his assignments. In those days she sometimes came out of the bedroom where the typewriter was to find both of them asleep on the studio couch, Jack wearing nothing but his underpants. Danny sprawled comfortably on her husband's chest with his thumb in his mouth. She would put Danny in his crib, then read whatever Jack had written that night before waking him up enough to come to bed.

The best bed, the best year

Such good things come from the best and so on

In these days, Jack's drinking had still been well in hand. On Saturday nights a bunch of his fellow students would drop over and there would be a case of beer and discussions in which she seldom took part because her husband had been sociology and his was English arguments over whether Pepys's diaries were literature or history, discussions of Charles Olson's poetry, sometimes the reading of works in progress. Those and a hundred others. Not a thousand. She felt no real urge to take part, it was enough to sit in her rocking chair beside Jack, who sat cross-legged on the floor, one hand holding a beer, the other gently cupping her calf or braceleting her ankle.

The competition at UNH had been fierce, and Jack carried an extra burden in his writing. He put in at least an hour at it every night. It was his routine. The Saturday sessions were necessary therapy. They let something out of him that might otherwise have sweled and sweled and he burst.

At the end of his grad work he had landed the job at Stonington, mostly on the strength of his stories—four of them published at that time, one of them in *Esquire*. She remembered that day clearly enough. It would take more than three years to forget it. She had almost thrown the envelope away, thinking it was a subscription offer. Opening it she had found instead that it was a letter saying that *Esquire* would like to use Jack's story "Concerning the Black Holes" early the following year. They would pay nine hundred dollars, not on publication but on acceptance. That was nearly half a year's take typing papers and she had flown to the telephone, leaving Danny in his high chair to goggle comically as her face lathered with creamed peas and beef puree.

Jack had arrived from the university forty-five minutes later, the Buick weighted down with seven friends and a keg of beer. After a ceremonial toast (Wendy also had a glass, although she ordinarily had no taste for beer) Jack had signed the acceptance letter, put it in the return envelope and went down the block to drop it in the letter box. When he came back he stood gravely in the door and said, "*Veni, vidi, vici*." There were cheers and ap-

the case. When the keg was empty at eleven that night, Jack and the other two were so tipsy that they were a little unsteady when on to hit a few bars.

She had gotten him aside in the downstairs hallway. The other two were already out in the car drunkenly singing the New Hampshire fight song. Jack was down on one knee, awkwardly fumbling with the laces of his moccasins.

"Jack," she said, "you shouldn't. You can't even tie your shoes, let alone drive."

He stood up and put his hands calmly on her shoulders. "Tonight I could fly to the moon if I wanted to."

"No," she said. "Not for all the *Esquire* stories in the world."

"I'll be home early."

But he hadn't been home until four in the morning, stumbling and mumbling his way up the stairs, waking Danny up when he came in. He had tried to soothe the baby and dropped him on the floor. Wendy had rushed out, thinking of what her mother would think if she saw the bruise before she thought of anything else—God help her, God help them both—and then picked Danny up, sat in the rocking chair with him, soothed him. She had been thinking of her mother for most of the five hours Jack had been gone, her mother's prophecy that Jack would never come to anything. *Big ideas*, her mother had said. *Sure. The welfare lines are full of educated fools with big ideas.* Did the *Esquire* story make her mother wrong or right? *Winnitred, you're not holding that baby right. Give him to me.* And was she not holding her husband right? Why else would he take his joy out of the house? A helpless kind of terror had risen up in her and it never occurred to her that he had gone out for reasons that had nothing to do with her.

"Congratulations," she said, rocking Danny, who was almost asleep again. "Maybe you gave him a concussion."

"It's just a bruise." He sounded sulky, wanting to be repented a little boy. For an instant she hated him.

"Maybe," she said tightly. "Maybe not." She heard so much of her mother talking to her departed father in her own voice that she was sickened and afraid.

"Like mother like daughter," Jack muttered.

"Go to bed," she cried, her fear coming out sounding like anger. "Go to bed, you're drunk!"

"Don't tell me what to do."

"Jack . . . please, we shouldn't . . . it . . ." There were no words.

"Don't tell me what to do," he repeated sullenly, and then went into the bedroom. She was left alone in the rocking chair with Danny, who was sleeping again. Five minutes later Jack's snores came floating out to the living room. That had been the first night she had slept on the couch.

Now she turned restlessly on the bed, already dozing. Her mind, freed of any linear order by encroaching sleep, floated past the first year at Stovington, past the steadily worsening times that had reached low ebb when her husband had broken Danny's arm, to that morning in the breakfast nook.

Danny outside playing trucks in the sandpile, his arm still in the cast. Jack sitting at the table, pallid and grizzled, a cigarette jittering between his fingers. She had decided to ask him for a divorce. She had pondered the question from a hundred different angles, had been pondering it in fact for the six months before the broken arm. She told herself she would have made the decision long ago if it hadn't been for Danny, but not even that was necessarily true. She dreamed on the long nights when Jack was out and her dreams were always of her mother's face and of her own wedding.

(Who giveth this woman? Her father standing in his best suit which was none too good—he was a traveling salesman for a line of canned goods that even then was going broke—and his tired face, how old he looked, how pale. *I do*.)

Even after the accident—if you could call it an accident—she had not been able to bring it all the way out, to admit that her marriage was a lopsided defeat. She had waited, dumbly hoping that a miracle would occur and Jack would see what was happening not only to him but to her. But there had been no slowdown. A drink before going off to the Academy. Two or three beers with lunch at the Stovington House. Three or four martinis before dinner. Five or six more while grading papers. The weekends were worse. The nights out with Al Shockley were worse still. She had never dreamed there could be so much pain in a life when there was nothing physically wrong. She hurt all the time. How much of it was her fault? That question haunted her. She felt like her

mother like her father. Sometimes when she felt like herself she wondered what it would be like for Danny and she dreaded the day when he grew old enough to lay blame. And she wondered where they would go. She had no doubt her mother would take her in, and no doubt that after half a year of watching her disperse remade Danny's meals recooked and redistributed, of coming home to find his clothes changed or his hair cut or the books her mother found unsuitable spirited away to some lumber in the attic.

After half a year of that she would have a complete nervous breakdown. And her mother would pat her hand and say comfortingly *Although it's not your fault it's all your own fault. You were never ready. You showed your true colors when you came between your father and me.*

My father Danny's father Mine too

(Who goeth this woman? I do. Dead of a heart attack six months later.)

The night before that morning she had been awake almost until he came in, thinking coming to her decision.

The divorce was necessary she told herself. Her mother and father did it the night in the decision. Neither did her feelings of guilt over that marriage nor her feelings of inadequacy over her own. It was necessary for her son's sake and for herself if she was to salvage anything at all from her earthly world. The bargaining on the way was brutal but clear. Her husband was a louse. He had a bad temper and he could no longer keep wholly under control now that he was drinking so heavily and his drinking was going so badly. Accidentally or not accidentally he had broken Danny's arm. He was going to lose his job if not this year then the year after. Already she had noticed the sympathetic looks from the other factory wives. She told herself that she had stuck with the messy job of her marriage for as long as she could. Now she would have to leave it. Jack could have full visitation rights and she would visit sporadically from him only until she could find something and get on her feet and that would have to be fairly rapidly because she didn't know how long Jack would be able to pay support money. She would do it with as little bitterness as possible. But it had to end.

Sleeping she had fallen off on her own back and groggy sleep haunted by the faces of her own mother and father. *You're nothing but a home-wrecker* her mother said. *Who goeth this*

woman? the minister said. *I do*, her father said. But in the bright and sunny morning she felt the same. Her back to him, her hands plunged in warm dishwater up to the wrists, she had commenced with the unpleasantness.

"I want to talk to you about something that might be best for Danny and I. For you too, maybe. We should have talked about it before, I guess."

And then he had said an odd thing. She had expected to discover his anger, to provoke the bitterness, the recriminations. She had expected a mad dash for the liquor cabinet. But not this soft, almost toneless reply that was so unlike him. It was almost as though the Jack she had lived with for six years had never come back last night—as if he had been replaced by some unearthly doppelgänger that she would never know or be quite sure of.

"Would you do something for me? A favor?"

"What?" She had to discipline her voice strictly to keep it from trembling.

"Let's talk about it in a week. If you still want to."

And she had agreed. It remained unspoken between them. During that week he had seen Al Shockley more than ever, but he came home early and there was no liquor on his breath. She imagined she smelled it, but knew it wasn't so. Another week. And another.

Divorce went back to committee, unvoted on.

What had happened? She still wondered and still had not the slightest idea. The subject was taboo between them. He was like a man who had leaned around a corner and had seen an unexpected monster lying in wait, crouching among the dried bones of its old kills. The liquor remained in the cabinet, but he didn't touch it. She had considered throwing them out a dozen times but in the end always backed away from the idea, as if some unknown charm would be broken by the act.

And there was Danny's part in it to consider.

If she felt she didn't know her husband when she was in awe of her child—awe in the strict meaning of that word—a kind of unconfined superstitious dread.

Dozing lightly the image of the instant of his birth was presented to her. She was again lying on the delivery table, bathed in sweat, her hair in strings, her feet splayed out in the stirrups

(and a little high from the gas they kept giving her whiffs of, at

one point she had muttered that she felt like an advertisement for gang rape and the nurse, an old bird who had assisted at the births of enough children to populate a high school, found that extremely funny)

the doctor between her legs, the nurse off to one side, arranging instruments and humming. The sharp, glassy pains had been coming at steadily shortening intervals, and several times she had screamed in spite of her shame.

Then the doctor told her quite sternly that she must *Push* and she did, and then she felt something being taken from her. It was a clear and distinct feeling, one she would never forget—the thing *taken*. Then the doctor held her son up by the legs—she had seen his tiny sex and known he was a boy immediately—and as the doctor groped for the mask, she had seen something else, something so horrible that she found the strength to scream again after she had thought all screams were used up.

He has no face!

But, of course there had been a face, Danny's own sweet face, and the caul that had covered it at birth now resided in a small jar which she had kept almost shamefully. She did not hold with old superstition, but she had kept the caul nevertheless. She did not hold with wives' tales, but the boy had been unusual from the first. She did not believe in second sight but

Did Daddy have an accident? I dreamed Daddy had an accident.

Something had changed him. She didn't believe it was just her getting ready to ask for a divorce that had done it. Something had happened before that morning. Something that had happened while she slept uneasily. Al Shockley said that nothing had happened, nothing at all, but he had averted his eyes when he said it, and if you believed facially gossip, Al had also climbed aboard the fabled wagon.

Did Daddy have an accident?

Maybe a chance collision with fate, surely nothing much more concrete. She had read that day's paper and the next day's with a closer eye than usual, but she saw nothing she could connect with Jack. God help her, she had been looking for a hit and run accident or a barnyard brawl that had resulted in serious injuries or "who knew" Who wanted to? But no policeman came to call,

either to ask questions or with a warrant empowering him to take paint scrapings from the VW's bumpers. Nothing. Or, or her husband's one hundred and eighty degree change and her son's sleepy question on waking.

Did Daddy have an accident? I dreamed.

She had stuck with Jack more for Danny's sake than she would admit in her waking hours, but now sleeping lightly, she could admit it. Danny had been Jack's for the asking, almost from the first. Just as she had been her father's, almost from the first. She couldn't remember Danny ever spitting a bottle back on Jack's shirt. Jack could get him to eat after she had given up in disgust, even when Danny was teething and it gave him visible pain to chew. When Danny had a stomachache, she would rock him for an hour before he began to quiet. Jack had only to pick him up, walk twice around the room with him, and Danny would be asleep on Jack's shoulder. His thumb so deeply corked in his mouth.

He hadn't minded changing diapers, even those he called the special favorites. He sat with Danny for hours on one, holding him on his lap, playing finger games with him, making faces at him while Danny poked at his nose and then, confused with the giggles. He made formulas and administered them faithfully, getting up every last burp afterward. He would wake Danny with him in the car to get the paper or a bottle of milk or milk at the hardware store even when the reason was still an infant. He had taken Danny to a Stonington Keene soccer match when Danny was only six months old, and Danny had sat motionlessly on his father's lap through the whole game, wrapped in a blanket, a small Stonington pennant clutched in one chubby fist.

He loved his mother but he was his father's boy.

And hadn't she felt time and time again her son's weightless opposition to the whole idea of divorce? She would be thinking about it in the kitchen, turning it over in her mind as she turned the potatoes for supper over in her hands for the potatoes' sake. And she would turn around to see him sitting cross-legged on a kitchen chair, looking at her with eyes that seemed both frightened and accusatory. Walking with him in the park, he would suddenly seize both her hands and say, almost demand, "Do you love me? Do you love daddy?" And, confused, she would nod or say, "Of course I do, honey." Then he would run to the duck

pond, sending them squawking and scared to the other end, flapping their wings in a panic before the small ferocity of his charge, leaving her to stare after him and wonder.

There were even times when it seemed that her determination to at least discuss the matter with Jack dissolved, not out of her own weakness, but under the determination of her son's will.

I don't believe such things.

But in sleep she did believe them, and in sleep, with her husband's seed still drying on her thighs, she felt that the three of them had been permanently welded together—that if their three-oneness was to be destroyed, it would not be destroyed by any of them but from outside.

Most of what she believed centered around her love for Jack. She had never stopped loving him, except maybe for that dark period immediately following Danny's "accident." And she loved her son. Most of all, she loved them together—walking or riding or only sitting, Jack's large head and Danny's small one poised alertly over the fans of old maid hands, sharing a bottle of Coke, looking at the funnies. She loved having them with her, and she hoped to dear God that this hotel caretaking job Al had gotten for Jack would be the beginning of good times again.

*And the wind gonna rise up, baby,
and blow my blues away . . .*

Soft and sweet and mellow, the song came back and lingered, following her down into a deeper sleep where thought ceased and the faces that came in dreams went unremembered.

7

IN ANOTHER BEDROOM

Danny awoke with the booming still loud in his ears, and the drunk, savagely peevish voice crying hoarsely: *Come out here and take your medicine! I'll find you! I'll find you!*

But now the hooting was only his racing heart, and the only voice in the night was the faraway sound of a police siren.

He lay in bed motionlessly, looking up at the wind-stirred shadows of the leaves on his bedroom ceiling. They twined sinuously together, making shapes like the vines and creepers in a jungle, and patterns woven into the nap of a check carpet. He was clad in Doctor Denon pajamas, but he wore the pajama suit and his skin he had grown a more closely fitting singlet of perspiration.

"Tony?" he whispered. "You there?"

No answer.

He slipped out of bed and padded silently across to the window and looked out on Arapahoe Street, now still and silent. It was two in the morning. There was nothing out there but empty sidewalks cluttered with fallen leaves, parked cars, and the long-necked streetlight on the corner across from the Cliff Drive gas station. With its hooded top and motionless stance, the streetlight looked like a monster in a space show.

He looked up the street both ways, straining his eyes for Tony's slight, beckoning form, but there was no one there.

The wind sighed through the trees, and the fallen leaves rattled up the deserted walks and around the hubcaps of parked cars. It was a faint and sorrowful sound, and the boy thought that he might be the only one in Boulder awake enough to hear it. The only human being, at least. There was no way of knowing what else might be out in the night, slinking hungrily through the shadows, waiting and seeing in the breeze.

I'll find you! I'll find you!

"Tony?" he whispered again, but without much hope.

Only the wind spoke back, gusting more strongly this time, scattering leaves across the sloping roof below his window. Some of them slipped into the gutter and came to rest there like tired dancers.

Danny . . . Danneee

He started at the sound of this familiar voice and craned out the window, his small hand on the sill. Was the sound of Tony's voice the whole night seemed to have come silently and secretly alive, whispering even when the wind quieted again and the leaves were still and the shadows had stopped moving. He thought he saw a darker shadow standing by the bus stop a block down, but it was hard to tell if it was a real thing or an eye-trick.

Don't go, Danry . . .

Then the wind gusted again, making him squint, and the shadow by the bus stop was gone . . . if it had ever been there at all. He stood by his window for

(a minute? an hour?)

some time longer, but there was no more. At last he crept back into his bed and pulled the blankets up and watched the shadows thrown by the alien streetlight turn into a sinuous jungle filled with flesh-eating plants that wanted only to sip around him, squeeze the life out of him, and drag him down into a blackness where one sinister word flashed in red,

REDRUM.

PART TWO

Closing Day

A VIEW OF THE OVERLOOK

Mommy was worried.

She was afraid the bug wouldn't make it up and down all these mountains and that they would get stranded by the side of the road where somebody might come ripping along and hit them. Danny himself was more sanguine, if Daddy thought the bug would make this one last trip, then probably it would.

"We're just about here," Jack said.

Wendy brushed her hair back from her temples. "Thank God."

She was sitting in the right-hand bucket, a Victoria Holt paperback open but face down in her lap. She was wearing her blue dress, the one Danny thought was her prettiest. It had a sailor collar and made her look very young like a girl just getting ready to graduate from high school. Daddy kept putting his hand high up on her leg and she kept laughing and brushing it off, saying "Get away, fly."

Danny was impressed with the mountains. One day Daddy had taken them up in the ones near Boulder—the ones they called the Flatirons, but these were much bigger, and on the tallest of them you could see a fine dusting of snow, which Daddy said was there year-round.

And they were actually *in* the mountains, no goofing around. Sheer rock faces rose all around them, so high you could barely see their tops even by craning your neck out the window. When they left Boulder, the temperature had been in the high seventies. Now, just after noon, the air up here felt crisp and cold like November back in Vermont and Daddy had the heater going not that it worked all that well. They had passed several signs that said FALLING ROCK ZONE (Mommy read each one to him) and al-

though Danny had waited anxiously to see some rock fall none had. At least not yet.

Half an hour ago they had passed another sign that Daddy said was very important. This sign said ENTERING SIDEWINDER PASS, and Daddy said that sign was as far as the snowplows went in the wintertime. After that the road got too steep. In the winter the road was closed from the little town of Sidwinder, which they had gone through just before they got to that sign, all the way to Buckland, Utah.

Now they were passing another sign.

"What's that one, Mom?"

"That one says SLOWER VEHICLES USE RIGHT LANE. That means us."

"The bug will make it," Danny said.

"Please, God," Mommy said, and crossed her fingers. Danny looked down at her open-toed sandals and saw that she had crossed her toes as well. He giggled. She smiled back, but he knew that she was still worried.

The road wound up and up in a series of snow S curves, and Jack dropped the bug's stick shift from fourth gear to third then into second. The bug wheezed and protested, and Wendy's eye fixed on the speedometer needle, which sank from forty to thirty to twenty, where it hovered reluctantly.

"The fuel pump . . ." she began timidly.

"The fuel pump will go another three miles," Jack said shortly.

The rock wall fell away on the right, disclosing a slash valley that seemed to go down forever, lined a dark green with Rocky Mountain pine and spruce. The pines fell away to gray cliffs of rock that dropped for hundreds of feet before smoothing out. She saw a waterfall spilling over one of them, the early afternoon sun sparkling in it like a golden fish snared in a blue net. They were beautiful mountains but they were hard. She did not think they would forgive many mistakes. An unhappy foreboding rose in her throat. Further west in the Sierra Nevada the Donner Party had become snowbound and had resorted to cannibalism to stay alive. The mountains did not forgive many mistakes.

With a punch of the clutch and a jerk, Jack shifted down to first gear and they labored upward, the bug's engine thumping gamely.

"You know," she said. "I don't think we've seen five cars since

we came through Sedwinder. And one of them was the hotel Limousine."

Jack nodded. "It goes right to Stapleton Airport in Denver. There's already some icy patches up beyond the hotel, Watson says, and they're forecasting more snow for tomorrow up higher. Anybody going through the mountains now wants to be on one of the main roads, just in case. That goddam Ullman better still be up there. I guess he will be."

"You're sure the larder is fully stocked?" she asked, still thinking of the Donners.

"He said so. He wanted Hallorann to go over it with you. Hallorann's the cook."

"Oh," she said faintly, looking at the speedometer. It had dropped from fifteen to ten miles an hour.

"There's the top," Jack said, pointing three hundred yards ahead. "There's a scenic turnout and you can see the Overlook from there. I'm going to pull off the road and give the bug a chance to rest." He craned over his shoulder at Danny, who was sitting on a pile of blankets. "What do you think, doc? We might see some deer. Or caribou."

"Sure, Dad."

The VW labored up and up. The speedometer dropped to just above the five-mile-an-hour hashmark and was beginning to back when Jack pulled off the road.

("What's that sign, Mommy?" "SCENIC TURNOUT," she read dutifully.)

and stepped on the emergency brake and let the VW run in neutral.

"Come on," he said, and got out.

They walked to the guardrail together.

"That's it," Jack said, and pointed at eleven o'clock.

For Wendy, it was discovering truth in a cliché: her breath was taken away. For a moment she was unable to breathe at all, the view had knocked the wind from her. They were standing near the top of one peak. Across from them—who knew how far?—an even taller mountain reared into the sky, its jagged tip only a silhouette that was now numbed by the sun, which was beginning its decline. The whole valley floor was spread out below them, the

slopes that they had climbed in the laboring bug falling away with such dizzying suddenness that she knew to look down there for too long would bring on nausea and even fatal vomiting. The imagination seemed to spring to full life in the clear air, beyond the realm of reason, and to look was to helplessly see one's self plunging down and down and down, sky and slopes changing places in slow cartwheels, the scream drifting from your mouth like a lazy balloon as your hair and your dress blew out.

She jerked her gaze away from the drop almost by force and followed Jack's finger. She could see the highway clinging to the side of this cathedral spire, switching back on itself but always tending northwest, still climbing but at a more gentle angle. Further up, seemingly set directly into the slope itself, she saw the grimly clinging pines gave way to a wide square of green lawn and standing in the middle of it overlooking all this, the hotel. The Overlook. Seeing it, she found breath and voice again.

"Oh, Jack, it's gorgeous!"

"Yes, it is," he said. "Ullman says he thinks it's the single most beautiful location in America. I don't care much for him, but I think he might be . . . Danny! Danny, are you all right?"

She looked around for him and her sudden fear for him blotted out everything else, stupendous or not. She darted toward him. He was holding onto the guardrail and looking up at the hotel, his face a pasty gray color. His eyes had the blank look of someone on the verge of fainting.

She knelt beside him and put steadying hands on his shoulders. "Danny, what's—"

Jack was beside her. "You okay, doc?" He gave Danny a brisk little shake and his eyes cleared.

"I'm okay, Daddy. I'm fine."

"What was it, Danny?" she asked. "Were you dizzy, honey?"

"No, I was just . . . thinking. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to scare you." He looked at his parents, kneeling in front of him, and offered them a small, puzzled smile. "Maybe it was the sun. The sun got in my eyes."

"We'll get you up to the hotel and give you a drink of water," Daddy said.

"Okay."

And in the bug, which moved upward more surely on the

gentler grade. he kept looking out between them as the road unwound, affording occasional glimpses of the Overlook Hotel, its massive bank of westward-looking windows reflecting back the sun. It was the place he had seen in the midst of the alizzard, the dark and booming place where some hideously familiar figure sought him down long corridors carpeted with jungle. The place Tony had warned him against. It was here. It was here. Whatever Redrum was, it was here.

9

CHECKING IT OUT

Ullman was waiting for them just inside the wide, old-fashioned front doors. He shook hands with Jack and nodded coolly at Wendy, perhaps noticing the way heads turned when she came through into the lobby, her golden hair spilling across the shoulders of the simple navy dress. The hem of the dress stopped a modest two inches above the knee, but you didn't have to see more to know they were good legs.

Ullman seemed truly warm toward Danny only, but Wendy had experienced that before. Danny seemed to be a child for people who ordinarily held W. C. Fields' sentiments about children. He bent a little from the waist and offered Danny his hand. Danny shook it formally, without a smile.

"My son Danny," Jack said. "And my wife Winnifred."

"I'm happy to meet you both," Ullman said. "How old are you, Danny?"

"Five, sir."

"Sir, yet," Ullman smiled and glanced at Jack. "He's well-mannered."

"Of course he is," Jack said.

"And Mrs. Torrance." He offered the same little bow, and for a bemused instant Wendy thought he would kiss her hand. She half-offered it and he did take it, but only for a moment, clasped in

both of his. His hands were small and dry and smooth, and she guessed that he powdered them.

The lobby was a bustle of activity. A man every one of the old-fashioned high-backed chairs was taken. Bell boys shuffled in and out with suitcases and there was a line at the desk, which was dominated by a huge brass cash register. The BankAmericana and Master Charge details on it seemed jarringly anachronistic.

To their right, down toward a pair of tall double doors that were pulled closed and roped off, there was an old-fashioned fireplace now blazing with birch logs. Three nuns sat on a sofa that was drawn up a most to the hearth itself. They were talking and smiling with their bags stacked up to either side, waiting for the check-out line to thin a little. As Wendy watched them they burst into a chorus of tinkling, glib laughter. She felt a smile touch her own lips, not one of them could be under sixty.

In the background was the constant hum of conversation, the muted *ding* of the silver-plated bell beside the cash register as one of the two clerks on duty struck it, the slightly impatient call of "Front, please!" It brought back strong, warm memories of her honeymoon in New York with Jack, at the Beckman Tower. For the first time she let herself believe that this might be exactly what the three of them needed—a season together away from the world, a sort of family honeymoon. She smiled affectionately down at Danny, who was goggling around frankly at everything. Another limo, as gray as a banker's vest, had pulled up out front.

"The last day of the season," Ullman was saying. "Closing day. Always hectic. I had expected you more around three, Mr. Torrance."

"I wanted to give the kids time for a nervous breakdown if it decided to have one," Jack said. "It didn't."

"How fortunate," Ullman said. "I'd like to take the three of you on a tour of the place a little later, and of course Dick Hallorann wants to show Mrs. Torrance the Overlook's kitchen. But I'm afraid—"

One of the clerks came over and almost tugged his forelock.

"Excuse me, Mr. Ullman—"

"Well? What is it?"

"It's Mrs. Bront," the clerk said uncomfortably. "She refuses to

pay her bill with anything but her American Express card. I told her we stopped taking American Express at the end of the season last year, but she won't . . ." His eyes shifted to the Torrance family, then back to Ullman. He shrugged.

"I'll take care of it."

"Thank you, Mr. Ullman." The clerk crossed back to the desk, where a dreadnought of a woman bundled into a long fur coat and what looked like a black leather boa was remonstrating loudly.

"I have been coming to the Overlook Hotel since 1955," she was telling the smiling, shrugging clerk. "I continued to come even after my second husband died of a stroke on that tiresome roque court—I told him the sun was too hot that day—and I have never

I repeat: never . . . paid with anything but my American Express credit card. Call the police if you like. Have them drag me away! I will still refuse to pay with anything but my American Express credit card. I repeat: . . ."

"Excuse me," Mr. Ullman said.

They watched him cross the lobby, touch Mrs. Brant's elbow deferentially, and spread his hands and nod when she turned her trade on him. He listened sympathetically, nodded again, and said something in return. Mrs. Brant smiled triumphantly, turned to the unhappy desk clerk, and said loudly, "Thank God there's one employee of this hotel who hasn't become an utter Philistine!"

She allowed Ullman, who barely came to the bulky shoulder of her fur coat, to take her arm and lead her away, presumably to his inner office.

"Whoaaa." Wendy said, smiling. "There's a dude who earns his money."

"But he didn't like that lady," Danny said immediately. "He was just pretending to like her."

Jack grinned down at him. "I'm sure that's true, doc. But flattery is the stuff that greases the wheels of the world."

"What's flattery?"

"Flattery," Wendy told him, "is when your daddy says he likes my new yellow slacks even if he doesn't or when he says I don't need to take off five pounds."

"Oh. Is it lying for fun?"

"Something very like that."

He had been looking at her closely and now said "You're pretty, Minny." He frowned in confusion when they exchanged a glance and then burst into laughter.

"I'll not do it," waste much flattery on me," Jack said. "Come on over by the window, you guys. I feel conspicuous standing out here in the middle with my denim jacket on. I honest to God didn't think there'd be anybody much here on closing day. Guess I was wrong."

"You look very handsome," she said, and then they laughed again. Wendy putting a hand over her mouth. Danny said didn't understand but it was okay. They were living each other. Danny thought this place reminded her of somewhere else.

(the beak-man place)

where she had been happy. He wished he used it as well as she did, but he kept telling himself over and over that the things Tony showed him didn't always come off. He would be careful. He would watch for something called Reunion. But he wouldn't say anything unless he absolutely had to. Because they were happy, they had been laughing and there were no bad thoughts.

"Look at this view," Jack said.

"Oh, it's gorgeous! Danny, look."

But Danny didn't think it was particularly gorgeous. He was a little high, they made him dizzy. Beyond the wide front porch, which ran the length of the hotel, a beautifully manicured lawn there was a putting green on the right, a sphere away to a long, rectangular swimming pool. A grassy sign stood on a small island at one end of the pool. There was one sign he could read by himself, a sign with *St. John's Episcopal* and a few others.

Beyond the pool a gravelled path wound off through baby pines and cypresses and aspens. He saw a small sign he didn't know. There was an arrow below it.

"What's R-O-Q-U-E, Daddy?"

A game. Danny said. It's a little bit like croquet, only you play on a gravel court that has sides and a high ball and the instead of grass. It's a very old game, Danny. Sometimes they have tournaments here."

"Do you play it?" a man asked.

"No, sir." Jack answered. "My dad says it's a little sweeter and

the head has two sides. One side is hard rubber and the other side is wood."

(Come out, you little shit!)

"It's pronounced *roke*," Daddy was saying "I'll teach you how to play, if you want."

"Maybe," Danny said in an odd colorless little voice that made his parents exchange a puzzled look over his head. "I might not like it, though."

"Well if you don't like it, doc, you don't have to pay. All right?"

"Sure."

"Do you like the animals?" Wendy asked "That's called a topiary." Beyond the path leading to *roque* there were hedges clipped into the shapes of various animals. Danny, whose eyes were sharp, make out a rabbit, a dog, a horse, a cow, and a trio of bigger ones that looked like frolicking lions.

"Those animals were what made Uncle Al think of me for the job," Jack told him. He knew that when I was in college I used to work for a landscaping company. That's a business that fixes people's lawns and bushes and hedges. I used to trim a lady's topiary."

Wendy put a hand over her mouth and snickered. Looking at her, Jack said, "Yes. I used to trim her topiary at least once a week."

"Get away, fly." Wendy said, and snickered again.

"Did she have nice hedges, Dad?" Danny asked, and at this they both stifled great bursts of laughter. Wendy laughed so hard that tears streamed down her cheeks and she had to get a Kleenex out of her handbag.

"They weren't animals, Danny," Jack said when he had control of himself. "They were playing cards. Spades and hearts and clubs and diamonds. But the hedges grow, you see."

(They creep, Watson had said. No, not the hedges, the boiler. You have to watch it all the time or you and your family will end up on the fuckin' moon.)

They looked at him, puzzled. The smile had faded off his face.

"Dad?" Danny asked.

He blinked at them, as if coming back from far away. "They

grow, Danny, and lose their shape. So I'll have to give them a haircut once or twice a week until it gets so cold they stop growing for the year."

"And a playground, too," Wendy said. "My lucky boy."

The playground was beyond the *topiary*. Two slides, a big swing set with half a dozen swings set at varying heights, a jungle gym, a tunnel made of cement rings, a sandbox, and a playhouse that was an exact replica of the Overlook itself.

"Do you like it, Danny?" Wendy asked.

"I sure do," he said, hoping he sounded more enthused than he felt. "It's neat."

Beyond the playground there was an inconspicuous chain-link security fence, beyond that the wide, macadamized drive that led up to the hotel, and beyond that the valley itself, dropping away into the bright blue haze of afternoon. Danny didn't know the word *amputation*, but if someone had explained it to him he would have seized on it. Far below, lying in the sun like a long black snake that had decided to snooze for a while, was the road that led back through Sidewinder Pass and eventually to Boulder. The road that would be closed a winter long. He felt a little suffocated at the thought, and almost jumped when Daddy dropped his hand on his shoulder.

"I'll get you hot drink as soon as I can, doc. They're a little busy right now."

"Sure, Dad."

Mrs. Brant came out of the inner office looking vindicated. A few moments later two hotel boys, struggling with eight suitcases between them, followed her as best they could as she strode triumphantly out the door. Danny watched through the window as a man in a gray uniform and a hat like a cap in the Army brought her long silver car around to the door and got out. He popped his cap to her and ran around to open the trunk.

And in one of those flashes that sometimes came, he got a complete thought from her, one that floated above the confused, low-pitched bubble of emotions and colors that he usually got in crowded places.

(I'd like to get into his pants)

Danny's brow wrinkled as he watched the hotel boys put her cases into the trunk. She was looking rather sharply at the man in the gray uniform, who was supervising the loading. Why would she

want to get that man's pants? Was she cold, even with that long fur coat on? And if she was hat cold, why hadn't she just put on some pants of her own? His mommy wore pants just about a winter.

The man in the gray uniform closed the trunk and walked back to help her into the car. Danny watched closely to see if she would say anything about his pants, but she only smiled and gave him a dollar bill—a tip. A moment later she was guiding the big silver car down the driveway.

He thought about asking his mother why Mrs. Brant might want that car-man's pants, and decided against it. Sometimes questions could get you in a whole lot of trouble. It had happened to him before.

So instead he squeezed in between them on the small sofa they were sharing and watched all the people check out at the desk. He was glad his mommy and daddy were happy and loving each other, but he couldn't help being a little worried. He couldn't help it.

10

HALLORANN

The cook didn't conform to Wendy's image of the typical resort hotel kitchen personage at all. To begin with, such a personage was called a *chef*, nothing so mundane as a cook—cooking was what she did in her apartment kitchen when she threw all the leftovers into a greased Pyrex casserole dish and added noodles. Further, the culinary wizard of such a place as the Overlook, which advertised in the resort section of the New York Sunday Times, should be small, rotund, and pasty-faced (rather like the Pillsbury Dough-Boy), he should have a thin pencil-line mustache like a forties musical comedy star, dark eyes, a French accent, and a detestable personality.

Hallorann had the dark eyes and that was all. He was a tall black man with a modest afro that was beginning to powder white

He had a soft southern accent and he laughed a lot, disclosing teeth too white and too even to be anything but 1950-vintage Sears and Roebuck dentures. Her own father had had a pair, which he called Roebuckers, and from time to time he would push them out at her comically at the supper table. . . . a ways. Wendy remembered now, when her mother was out in the kitchen getting something else or on the telephone.

Danny had stared up at his black giant in blue serge, and then had smiled when Halorann picked him up easily, set him in the crook of his elbow, and said, "You ain' gonna stay up here all winter."

"Yes I am," Danny said with a shy grin.

"No, you're gonna come down to St. Pete's with me and learn to cook and go out on the beach every damn evening watchin' for crabs. Right?"

Danny giggled delightedly and shook his head no. Halorann set him down.

"If you're gonna change your mind," Halorann said, heading over him gravely, "you better do it quick. Thirty minutes from now and I'm in my car. Two and a half hours after that I'm sitting at Gate 32, Concourse B, Stapleton International Airport, in the middle of the city of Denver, Colorado. Three hours after that I'm renting a car at the Miami Airport and on my way to sunny St. Pete's, waiting to get into my swim trunks and just leanin' up my sieve at anybody stuck and caught in the snow. Can you dig it, my boy?"

"Yes, sir," Danny said, smiling.

Halorann turned to Jack and Wendy. "Looks like a fine boy there."

"We think he'll do," Jack said, and offered his hand. Halorann took it. "I'm Jack Torrance. My wife wants fired Danny, y' see, me!"

And a pleasure it was. Ma'am, are you a W name or a Fredrick?"

"I'm a Wendy," she said, smiling.

"Okay. That's better than the other two I think. Right this way. Mr. Torrance wants you to have the best of the four you've got." He shook his head and said under his breath, "And won't be glad to see the last of *him*."

Halorann commenced to tour them around the most immense kitchen Wendy had ever seen in her life. It was sparkling clean. Every surface was coaxed to a high gloss. It was more than just big; it was intimidating. She walked at Halorann's side while Jack, wholly out of his element, hung back a little with Danny. A long pegboard hung with cutting instruments which went all the way from paring knives to two-handed cleavers hung beside a four-basin sink. There was a breadboard as big as their Boulder apartment's kitchen table. An amazing array of stainless-steel pots and pans hung from floor to ceiling, covering one whole wall.

"I think I'll have to leave a trail of breadcrumbs every time I come in," she said.

"Don't let it get you down," Halorann said. "It's big, but it's still only a kitchen. Most of this stuff you'll never even have to touch. Keep it clean, that's all I ask. Here's the stove I'd be using, if I was you. There are three of them total, but this is the smallest."

Smallest she thought dismally, looking at it. There were twelve burners: two regular ovens and a Dutch oven, a heated well on top in which you could simmer sauces or bake beans, a broiler, and a warmer—plus a million dials and temperature gauges.

"All gas," Halorann said. "You've cooked with gas before, Wendy?"

Yes.

"I love gas," he said, and turned on one of the burners. Blue flame popped into life and he adjusted it down to a faint glow with a delicate touch. "I like to be able to see the flame you're cooking with. You see where all the surface burner switches are?"

"Yes."

"And the oven dials are all marked. Myself, I favor the middle one because it seems to heat the most even, but you use whichever one you like—or all three, for that matter."

A TV dinner in each one," Wendy said, and laughed weakly.

Halorann roared. "Go right ahead, if you like. I left a lot of everything edible over by the sink. You see it?"

"Here it is, Mommy." Danny brought over two sheets of paper written closely on both sides.

"Good boy," Halorann said, taking it from him and ruffling his hair. "You sure you don't want to come in Florida with me, my

boy? Learn to cook the sweetest shrimp creole this side of paradise?"

Danny put his hands over his mouth and gagged and retreated to his father's side.

"You three folks could eat up here for a year, I guess," Holbrann said. "We got a cold pantry, a walk-in freezer, and sorts of vegetable bins, and two refrigerators. Come in and let me show you."

For the next ten minutes Holbrann opened bins and doors, disclosing food in such amounts as Wendy had never seen before. The food supplies amazed her but did not reassure her as much as she might have thought. The Donner Party kept recurring to her, not with thoughts of cannibalism (with all this food it would indeed be a long time before they were reduced to such poor rations as each other) but with the reinforced idea that this was indeed a serious business: when snow fell, getting out of here would not be a matter of an hour's drive to Newburgh but a major operation. They would sit up here in this deserted grand hotel, eating the food that had been left them like creatures in a fairy tale, and listening to the bitter wind around the snow-white eaves. In Vermont when Danny had broken his leg

(when Jack broke Danny's arm)

she had called the emergency Medical Squad, having the number from the little card attached to the phone. They had been at the house only ten minutes later. There were other numbers written on that little card. You could have a police car in five minutes and a fire truck in even less time than that, because the fire station was only three blocks away and one block over. There was a number, too, if the lights were out, for a man to call if the shower stopped up, or a man to call if the TV went on the fritz. But what would happen up here if Danny had one of his falling sneezes and swallowed his tongue?

(oh God, what a thought.)

What if the pipe clogged in the fire? If Jack fell down, he couldn't get up. What if he got hurt by a fall? What if . . .

(what if we have a winter storm and can't swap? It entered)

Holbrann showed them to the walk-in freezer first, where the cold air pulled out the scent of meat and fish. In the freezer was a sign which had already come

Hamburger in big plastic bags, ten pounds in each bag, a dozen bags. Forty whole chickens hanging from a row of hooks in the wood-planked walls. Canned hams stacked up like poker chips, a dozen of them. Below the chickens, ten roasts of beef, ten roasts of pork, and a huge leg of lamb.

"You like lamb, doc?" Hal lorann asked, grinning.

"I love it," Danny said immediately. He had never had it.

"I knew you did. There's nothing like two good slices of lamb on a cold night, with some mint jelly on the side. You got the mint jelly here, too. Lamb eases the belly. It's a nonconventional sort of meat."

From behind them Jack said curiously. "How did you know we called him doc?"

Halloran turned around. "Pardon?"

"Danny. We call him doc sometimes. Like in the Bugs Bunny cartoons."

"Looks sort of like a doc, doesn't he?" He wrinkled his nose at Danny, smacked his lips, and said, "Ehbbh, what's up, doc?"

Danny giggled and then Halloran said something

(Sure you don't want to go to Florida, doc?)

to him, very clearly. He heard every word. He looked at Halloran, startled and a little scared. Halloran winked solemnly and turned back to the food.

Wendy looked from the cook's broad, serge-clad back to her son. She had the oddest feeling that something had passed between them, something she could not quite follow.

"You got twelve packages of sausage, twelve packages of bacon," Halloran said. "So much for the pig. In this drawer, twenty pounds of butter."

"Real butter?" Jack asked.

"The A-number-one."

"I don't think I've had real butter since I was a kid back in Berlin, New Hampshire."

"Well, you'll eat it up here until it so seems a treat," Halloran said, and laughed. "Over in this bin you got your bread—thirty loaves of white, twenty of dark. We try to keep racial balance at the Overlook, don't you know. Now I know fifty loaves won't take you through, but there's plenty of makings and fresh is better than frozen any day of the week."

"Down here you got your fish. Brain food, right, doc?"

"Is it, Mom?"

"If Mr. Hallorann says so, honey." She smiled.

Danny wrinkled his nose. "I don't like fish."

"You're dead wrong," Hallorann said. "You just never had any fish that liked you. This fish here will live you a fine five pounds of rainbow trout, ten pounds of turbot, fifteen cans of tuna fish . . ."

"Oh yeah, I like tuna."

"and five pounds of the sweetest-tasting sole that ever swam in the sea. My boy, when next spring rolls around, you're gonna bank old . . ." He snapped his fingers as if he had forgotten something. "What's my name, now? I guess it just slipped my mind."

"Mr. Hallorann," Danny said, going on. "Dick to your friends."

"That's right! And you be on a friend, you make it Dick."

As he led him into the far corner, Jack and Wendy exchanged a puzzled glance, both of them trying to remember if Hallorann had told them his first name.

"And this here I put in special," Hallorann said. "Hope you folks enjoy it."

"Oh really, you should have," Wendy said, touched. It was a twenty-pound turkey wrapped in a wide scarlet ribbon with a bow on top.

"You got to have your turkey on Thanksgiving, Wendy," Hallorann said gravely. "I bet even there's a capon back here somewhere for Christmas. Doubtless you'd stumble on it. Let's come on out of here now before we all catch the pee-namon. Right, doc?"

"Right."

There were more wonders in the cold pantry. A hundred boxes of dried milk (Hallorann advised her gravely to buy fresh milk for the boy in S dewinder as long as it was feasible), five twelve-pound bags of sugar, a gallon jug of backstrap molasses, cereals, glass jugs of rice, macaroni, spaghetti, ranked cans of fruit and fruit salad, a bushel of fresh apples that scented the whole room with autumn, dried raisins, prunes, and apricots. "You got to be regular if you want to be happy," Hallorann said, and peered up at the cold-pantry ceiling where one old-fashioned light globe hung down on an iron chain, a deep bin filled with pota-

loes, and smaller caches of potatoes, onions, turnips, squashes and cabbages.

My word, Wendy said as they came out. But seeing all the fresh food after her thirty-dollar-a-week grocery budget stunned her that she was unable to say just what her word was.

"I'm running a bit late," Halorann said, checking his watch, "so I'll just let you go through the cabinets and the fridges as you get settled in. There's cheeses, canned milk, sweetened condensed milk, yeast, baking soda, a whole bagful of those Tab-e-Talk pies, a few bunches of bananas that ain't even near to ripe yet."

"Stop," she said, holding up a hand and laughing. "I'll never remember it all. It's super. And I promise to leave the place clean."

"That's all I ask." He turned to Jack. "Did Mr. T. man give you the rundown on the rats in his be-fry?"

Jack grinned. "He said there were possibly some in the attic, and Mr. Watson said there might be some more down in the basement. There must be two tons of paper down there, but I didn't see any shredded, as if they'd been using it to make nests."

"That Watson," Halorann said, shaking his head in mock sorrow. "Ain't he the foulest talking man you ever ran on?"

"He's quite a character," Jack agreed. "His own father had been the foulest talking man Jack had ever run on."

"It's sort of a pity," Halorann said, leading them back toward the wide swinging doors that gave on the Overlook dining room. "There was money in that family, long ago. It was Watson's granddad or great-granddad. I can't remember which. That built this place."

"So I was told," Jack said.

"What happened?" Wendy asked.

"Well, they couldn't make it go," Halorann said. "Watson will tell you the whole story—twice a day if you let him. The old man got a bee in his bonnet about the place. He let it drag him down, I guess. He had two boys and one of them was killed in a mining accident on the grounds while the hotel was still a building. That would have been 1908 or '09. The old man's wife died of the flu, and then it was just the old man and his youngest son. They ended up getting took on as caretakers in the same hotel the old man had built."

"It is sort of a pity," Wendy said.

"What happened to him? The old man?" Jack asked.

He plugged his finger into a light socket by mistake and that was the end of him," Halvorann said. "Some time in the early thirties before the Depression closed this place down for ten years.

"Anyway, Jack, I'd appreciate it if you and your wife would keep an eye out for rats in the kitchen, as well. If you should see them . . . traps, not poison."

Jack blinked. "Of course. Who'd want to put rat poison in the kitchen?"

Halvorann laughed derisively. "Mr. Ullman, that's who. That was his bright idea last fall. I put it to him, I said, 'What if we all get up here next May, Mr. Ullman, and I serve the traditional opening night dinner—which just happens to be salmon in a very nice sauce—and everybody gets sick and the doctor comes and says to you, 'Ullman, what have you been doing up here? You've got eighty of the richest folks in America suffering from rat poison right?'"

Jack threw his head back and belowed laughter. "What did Ullman say?"

Halvorann tucked his tongue into his cheek as if feeling for a bit of food in there. "He said, 'Get some traps, Halvorann.'"

This time they all laughed, even Danny, although he was not completely sure what the joke was, except it had something to do with Mr. Ullman, who didn't know everything after all.

The four of them passed through the dining room, empty and silent now, with its fabulous western exposure on the snow-dusted peaks. Each of the white linen tablecloths had been covered with a sheet of tough clear plastic. The rug, now rolled up for the season, stood in one corner like a sentinel on guard duty.

Across the wide room was a double set of barwing doors, and over them an old-fashioned sign lettered in gilt script: *The Colorado Lounge*.

Following his gaze, Halvorann said, "If you're a drunk n' man, I hope you brought your own supplies. That place is picked clean. Employee's party last night, you know. Every maid and bellhop in the place is going around with a headache today 'me included."

"I don't drink," Jack said shortly. They went back to the lobby

It had cleared greatly during the half hour they'd spent in the kitchen. The long main room was beginning to take on the quiet, deserted look that Jack supposed they would become familiar with soon enough. The high-backed chairs were empty. The nuns who had been sitting by the fire were gone, and the fire itself was down to a bed of comfortably glowing coals. Wendy glanced out into the parking lot and saw that although a dozen cars had disappeared

She found herself wishing they could get back in the VW and go back to Boulder . . . or anywhere else.

Jack was looking around for Ulman, but he wasn't in the lobby.

A young maid with her ash-blond hair pinned up on her neck came over. "Your luggage is out on the porch, Dick."

"Thank you, Sally." He gave her a peck on the forehead. "You have yourself a good winter. Getting married, I hear."

He turned to the Terrances as she stroled away, backside twitching partly. "I've got to hurry along if I'm going to make that plane. I want to wish you all the best. Know you I have it."

"Thanks," Jack said. "You've been very kind."

"I'll take good care of your kitchen," Wendy promised again. "Enjoy Florida."

"I always do," Hallorann said. He put his hands on his knees and bent down to Danny. "Last chance, guy. Want to come to Florida?"

"I guess not," Danny said, smiling.

"Okay. Like to give me a hand out to my car with my bags?"

"If my mommy says I can."

"You can," Wendy said, "but you'll have to have the jacket buttoned." She leaned forward to do it, but Hallorann was ahead of her, his large brown fingers moving with smooth dexterity.

"I'll send him right back in," Hallorann said.

"Fine," Wendy said, and lowered them to the door. Jack was still looking around for Ulman. The last of the Overlook's guests were checking out at the desk.

II

THE SHINING

There were four bags in a pile just outside the door. Three of them were giant, battered old suitcases covered with black imitation alligator hide. The last was an oversized zipper bag with a faded tartan skin.

"Guess you can handle that one, can't you?" Hallorann asked him. He picked up two of the big cases in one hand and hoisted the other under his arm.

"Sure," Danny said. He got a grip on it with both hands and followed the cook down the porch steps, trying manfully not to grunt and give away how heavy it was.

A sharp and cutting fall wind had come up since they had arrived, it whistled across the parking lot, making Danny wince his eyes down to slits as he carried the zipper bag in front of him, bumping on his knees. A few errant aspen leaves rattled and turned across the now mostly deserted asphalt, making Danny think momentarily of that night last week when he had awakened out of his nightmare and had heard—or thought he heard, at least—Tony telling him not to go.

Hallorann set his bags down by the trunk of a beige Plymouth Fury. "This ain't much car," he confided to Danny, "just a rental job. My Bessie's on the other end. She's a car—1950 Cadillac, and does she run sweet? I'll tell the world. I keep her in Florida because she's too old for all this mountain climbing. You need a hand with that?"

"No, sir," Danny said. He managed to carry it the last ten or twelve steps without grunting and set it down with a large sigh of relief.

"Good boy," Hallorann said. He produced a large key ring from the pocket of his blue serge jacket and unlocked the trunk. As he lifted the bags in he said, "You shine on, boy. Harder than

anyone I ever met in my life. And I'll say years and this January."

"Yeah?"

"You got a knack," Halorann said, looking at him. "Me I've always called it shining. That's what my grandmother called it, too. She had it. We used to sit in the kitchen when I was a boy no older than you and have long talks without even opening our mouths."

"Really?"

Halorann smiled at Danny's openmouthed, almost hungry expression and said, "Come on up and sit in the car with me for a few minutes. Want to talk to you." He slammed the trunk.

In the lobby of the Overlook, Wendy Torrance saw her son get into the passenger side of Halorann's car as the big black cook sat up behind the wheel. A sharp pang of fear struck her and she opened her mouth to tell Jack that Halorann had not been lying about taking their son to Florida—there was a kidnapping alarm. But they were only sitting there. She could barely see the small silhouette of her son's head, turned attentively toward Halorann's big one. Even at this distance, her small head had a set to it that she recognized: it was the way her son looked when there was something on the TV that particularly fascinated him, or when he and his father were playing old maid or rummy cribbage. Jack, who was still looking around for Ullman, hadn't noticed. Wendy kept silent, watching Halorann's car nervously, wondering what they could possibly be talking about that would make Danny cock his head that way.

In the car Halorann was saying, "Get you kinda lonely, thinkin' you were the only one?"

Danny, who had been frightened as well as lonely sometimes, nodded. "Am I the only one you ever met?" he asked.

Halorann laughed and shook his head. "No, child, no. But you shine the hardest."

"Are there lots, then?"

No," Halorann said, "but you do run across them. A lot of folks, they got a little bit of shine to them. They don't even know it. But they always seem to show up with flowers when their wives are frozen blue with the monthlies, they do grind on school tests, they don't even study for, they got a good idea how people are

feel it as soon as they wake up a room. I come across fifty or sixty like that. But it's only a dozen could nobody gram that knew they was shamed."

"Wow," Danny said, and thought about it. Then, "Do you know Mrs. Brant?"

"Her?" Hallorann asked scornfully. "She don't shine. Just sends her supper back two-three times every night."

"I know she doesn't," Danny said earnestly. "But do you know the man in the gray uniform that gets the cars?"

"Mike? Sure, I know Mike. What about him?"

"Mr. Hallorann, why would she want his pants?"

"Wha, are you talking about boy?"

"Well, when she was watching him, she was thinking she would sure like to get into his pants and I just wondered why."

But he got no further. Hallorann had thrown his head back, and rich, dark laughter issued from his chest, rolling around in the car like cannonfire. The seat shook with the force of it. Danny smiled, puzzled, and at last the storm subsided by fits and starts. Hallorann produced a large silk handkerchief from his breast pocket like a white flag of surrender and wiped his streaming eyes.

"Boy," he said, still snorting a little, "you are gonna know everything there is to know about the human condition before you make ten. I dunno if to envy you or not."

"But Mrs. Brant—"

"You never mind her," he said. "And don't go askin' your mom, either. You'd only upset her, dig what I'm sayin'?"

"Yes sir," Danny said. He dug it perfectly well. He had upset his mother that way in the past.

"That Mrs. Brant is just a dirty old woman with an itch, that's all you have to know." He looked at Danny speculatively. "How hard can you hit, doc?"

"Huh?"

"Give me a blast. Think at me. I want to know if you got as much as I think you do."

"What do you want me to think?"

"Anything. Just think it *hard*."

"Okay," Danny said. He considered it for a moment, then gathered his concentration and flung it out at Hallorann. He had never done anything precisely like this before, and at the last mo-

and some instinctive part of him rose up and blunted some of the thoughts raw force. He didn't want to hurt Mr. Halloran. So the thought arrowed out of him with a force he never would have believed. It was like a Nolan Ryan fast ball with a little extra on it.

{Gee I hope I don't hurt him}

And the thought was:

(!!! HI, DICK !!)

Halloran winced and jerked backward on the seat. His teeth came together with a hard click, drawing blood from his lower lip in a thin trickle. His hands flew up involuntarily from his lap to the level of his chest and then scurried back again. For a moment his eyelids fluttered limp with no conscious closure and Danny was frightened.

Mr. Halloran? Dick? Are you okay?

"I don't know," Halloran said, and laughed weakly. "I honest to God don't. My God, boy, you're a pistol."

"I'm sorry," Danny said, more alarmed. "Should I get my daddy? I'll run and get him."

"No, here I come. I'm okay, Danny. You just sit right there. I feel a little scrambled, that's all."

"I didn't go as hard as I could," Danny confessed. "I was scared to, at the last minute."

"Probably my good luck you did. . . . my brains would be leaking out my ears." He saw the alarm on Danny's face and smiled. "No harm done. What do I tell the lady?"

"Like I was Nolan Ryan throwing a fast ball," he replied promptly.

"You like baseball, do you?" Halloran was rubbing his temples gingerly.

Daddy and me like the Angels, Danny said. The Red Sox in the American League East and the Angels in the West. We saw the Red Sox against Cincinnati in the World Series. Wasn't it terrible? And Daddy was Danny's face went dark and troubled.

"Was what, Dan?"

I forget, Danny said. He started to put his thumb in his mouth to suck it but it was a shy suck. He put his thumb in his lap.

"Can you tell what your mom and dad are thinking, Danny?" Hal's mom was watching him closely.

"Most times, if I want to. But usually I don't try."

"Why not?"

"Well . . ." he paused a moment, troubled. "It would be like peeping into the bedroom and watching while they're doing the thing that makes babies. Do you know that thing?"

"I have had acquaintance with it." Hal's mom said gravely.

"They wouldn't like that. And they wouldn't like me peeping at their things. It would be dirty."

"I see."

"But I know how they're feeling," Danny said. "I can't help that. I know how you're feeling, too. I hurt you. I'm sorry."

"I've just a headache. I've had hangovers that were worse. Can you read other people, Danny?"

"I can't read yet at all," Danny said, "except a few words. But Dick's going to teach me this winter. My daddy used to teach reading and writing in a big school. Mostly writing, but he knows reading, too."

"I mean, can you tell what anybody's thinking?"

Danny thought about it.

"I can if it's *wild*," he said finally. "Like Mrs. Brant and the prints. Or like once when me and Mommy were in this big store to get me some shoes, there was this big kid looking at radars and he was thinking about taking one without buying it. Then he'd think, what if I get caught? Then he'd think, I really want it. Then he'd think about getting caught again. He was making himself sick about it . . . and he was making *me* sick. Mommy was talking to the man who sells the shoes so I went over and said, 'Kid, don't take that radar. Go away.' And he got really scared. He went away fast."

Hal's mom was grinning broadly. "I bet he did. Can you do anything else, Danny? Is it only thoughts and feelings, or is there more?"

"Can't only. 'Is there more, for you?'"

"Sometimes," Hal's mom said. "Not often. Sometimes sometimes there are dreams. Do you dream, Danny?"

"Sometimes," Danny said. "I dream when I'm awake. After I try comes. It's like my hand wanted to go into my mouth again. He

had never told anyone but Mommy and Daddy about Tony. He made his thumb-sucking hand go back into his mouth.

"Who's Tony?"

And suddenly Danny had one of those flashes of understanding that frightened him most of all. It was like a sudden glimpse of some incomprehensible machine that might be safe or might be deadly dangerous. He was too young to know which. He was too young to understand.

"What's wrong?" he cried. "You're asking me all this because you're worried, aren't you? Why are you worried about me? Why are you worried about us?"

Hal brann pulled his large dark shades on, he smothered his shoulders. "Son," he said. "I'm probably not sure. But I think soon here we've got a large thing on your head, Danny. You'll have to do a lot of growing up before you can take up on it. I guess. You got to be brave about it."

"But I don't understand things!" Danny burst out. "I do but I don't. People . . . they feel things and I feel them, but I don't know what I'm feeling!" He looked down at his tip-wretched feet. "I wish I could read some ones. Tony shows me signs and I can hardly read any of them."

"What's Tony?" Hal brann asked again.

Mommy and Daddy called him my invisible playmate. "Danny said, reciting the words carefully. "But he's really real. At night I think he's. Some ones, when I think I know I understand things, he comes. He says, 'Danny, I want to show you something. And make I pass out. On a . . . here are dreams I have seen.' He looked at Hal brann and said, 'well, they're dreams, aren't they?' But now . . . I can't remember the words for the ones I scared him and make you cry."

"Nightmares?" Hal brann asked.

"Yes. That's right. Nightmares."

"About this place? About the Overlook?"

Danny looked down at his thumb-sucking hand again. "Yes," he whispered. Then he spoke slowly, looking up at his father's face. "But I can't tell my daddy, and you can't either. It has to have a job because it's the only one I can do. And I'd get it for him and he has to fix it his pay, or he might say that to get the money. He says and I know what that is. It's getting a job, that's what."

it's when he used to drink. he *drunk* and that was a Bad Thing to do. He stopped on the verge of cars.

"Shh," Haforann said and puled Danny's face against the rough serge of his jacket. It smelled faintly of m...bais. That's a right, son. And if that truth likes your mouth let it go where it wants. But his face was troubled.

He said: "What you got, son. I can't shine on the Bible can I, having visions, and there's scientists that can't pre-cognition. I've read up on it, son. I've studied on it. They all mean seeing the future. Do you understand that?"

Danny nodded against Haforann's coat.

"I remember the strongest shame I ever had that way. I'm not able to forget. It was 1955. I was still in the Army then stationed overseas in West Germany. It was an hour before supper, and I was standing by the sink giving one of the KPs he'd for taken too much of. He pointed along with the peeler I says, Here, lemme show you how that's done." He held out the potato and the peeler and then the whole kitchen was gone. Bang, just like that. You say you see this guy Tony before. before you have dreams?"

Danny nodded.

Haforann put an arm around him. "With me it's smel'n oranges. All that afternoon I'd been smel'n them and drinkin' nothin' of it because they were on the menu for that night. we had thirty crates of Valencias. Everybody in the damn kitchen was smel'n oranges that night.

For a minute it was like I had just passed out. And then I heard an explosion and saw flames. There were people screaming. Sirens. And I heard this hissing noise that could only be steam. Then it seemed like I got a little closer to whatever it was and I saw a railroad car off the tracks and layin' on its side with *Georgia and South Carolina Railroad* written on it and I knew like a flash that my brother Car was on that train and it dinged the tracks and Car was dead. Just like that. Then it was gone and here's this scared stupid KP in front of me. He holdin' out his potato and the peeler. He says, Are you okay, Sarge? And I says, No. My brother's just been killed down in Georgia. And when I finally got my mamma on the overseas telephone she told me how it was.

"But see, boy, I already knew how it was."

"A lot of times I've thought I've seen things. No, I won't say what. It isn't for a little boy like you. Just nasty things. Once I had something to do with those china heads copped to look like an m.m.s. Another time there was a maid, Deborah Vickery her name was, and she had a little shine to her, but I won't think she knew it. Mr. L'Etrian fired her. . . . do you know what that is, doc?"

"Yes, sir," Danny said carefully, "my daddy got fired from his teaching job and that's why we're in Colorado, I guess."

"Well, L'Etrian fired her on account of her saying she'd seen something in one of the rooms where . . . well, where a bad thing happened. That was in Room 2-7, and I want you to promise me you won't go in there, Danny. Not all winter. Steer right clear."

"All right," Danny said. "Did the lady—the maiden—did she ask you to go look?"

"Yes, sir, did. And there was a bad thing there. But . . . I don't think it was a bad thing that could *hurt* anyone. Danny, that's what I'm tryin' to say. People who shine can sometimes see things that are *gonna* happen, and I think sometimes they can see things that *did* happen. But they're just like pictures in a book. Did you ever see a picture in a book that scared you, Danny?"

"Yes," he said, thinking of the story of *Bluebeard* and the picture where *Bluebeard's* new wife opens the door and sees all the heads.

"But . . . I know it couldn't hurt you, did it, you?"

"Yes, yes . . ." Danny said, a little dubious.

"Well, that's how it is in this hotel. I don't know why, but it seems that all the bad things that ever happened here, there's little pieces of those things still layin' around like fingernail clippins or a hair gers that somebody nasty just wiped under a chair. I won't know who it should just be here, there's bad prings-on in just about every hotel in the world, I guess, and I've worked in a lot of them and had no trouble. Only here. But Danny, I don't think these things can hurt anybody." He emphasized each word in the sentence with a nod of the boy's shoulders. "So if you ever find something in a hallway or a room or outside by those heads . . . just look the other way and when you look back, it'll be gone. Are you diggin' me?"

"Yes," Danny said, the form of the question so hard. He got up, in

his knees, kissed Hal Torann's cheek and gave him a big hard hug. Hal Torann hugged him back.

When he released the boy he asked, "Your folks, they don't shine, do they?"

"No, I don't think so."

"I tried them like I did you," Hal Torann said. "Your mamma whipped the finest hit I think all my boys shine on. I know at least that their kids grow up enough to watch out for themselves. Your dad . . ."

Hal Torann paused momentarily. He had pricked at the boy's father and he couldn't know. It wasn't like meeting someone who had the shine or someone who definitely did not. Poking a Danny's father had been strange, as Jack Torrance had something, something that he was hiding. Or something he was hiding so deep & submerged in himself that it was impossible to get to.

"I don't think he shines at all," Hal Torann finished. "So you don't worry about him. You just take care of you. Don't think that's too much to ask. You can't let him know he can't do it, can you?"

"Okay."

"Danny? Hey, dad?"

Danny looked around. "That's Mom. She works and I have to go."

"I know you, I do," Hal Torann said. "You have a good time here, Danny. Best you can, anyway."

"I will. Thanks, Mr. Hal. Hope I see you, better."

The smiling triumph came to his mind.

(Dick, to my friends)

(Yes, Dick, okay)

His eyes met and Dick II did not wink.

Danny scrambled across the sidewalk and opened the passenger door. As he was getting in, Hal Torann said, "Danny?"

"What?"

"I hope to find a decent girl to give to you. A big one, like the one you gave me. I want to give something to my son. I want to give to my friends. And I want to give to my family."

"Okay," Danny said and smiled.

"You take care, big boy."

"I will."

Danny slammed the door and ran across the parking lot toward the north, where Wendy stood holding her elbows against the cold wind. Harjorann watched the big grin slowly fading.

I don't think there's anything here that can hurt you.

I don't *think*.

But what if he was wrong? He had known that this was his last season at the Overlook ever since he had seen that thing in the bathtub of Room 217. It had been worse than any picture in any book, and from here the boy running to his mother looked so *small* . . .

I don't *think*—

His eyes drifted down to the toptary animals.

Abruptly he started the car and put it in gear and drove away trying not to look back. And of course he did, and of course the porch was empty. They had gone back inside. I was as if the Overlook had swallowed them.

12

THE GRAND TOUR

"What were you talking about, hon?" Wendy asked him as they went back inside.

"Oh, nothing much."

"For nothing much is sure was a long talk."

He shrugged and Wendy saw Danny's passivity in the gesture. Jack could hardly have done it better himself. She would get so more out of Danny. She felt strong exasperation mixed with an even stronger love—the love was helpless, the exasperation came from a feeling that she was deliberately being excluded. With the two of them around she sometimes felt like an outsider, a bit player who had accidentally wandered back onstage while the main action was taking place. Well, they wouldn't be able to exclude her this winter, her two exasperating males; quarters were going to be a little too close for that. She suddenly realized she

was feeling jealous of the closeness between her husband and her son, and felt ashamed. This was so close to the way her own and her might have felt. . . . the close her comfort.

The lobby was now empty except for Ullman and the head desk clerk (they were at the register, cashing up) a couple of maids who had changed to warm slacks and sweaters, standing by the front door and looking on with their luggage piled around them, and Watson, the maintenance man. He caught her looking at him and gave her a wink. . . . a decidedly lecherous one. She looked away hurriedly. Jack was over by the window just outside the restaurant, studying the view. He looked rapt and dreamy.

The cash register apparently checked out because now Ullman ran it smoothly with an authoritative snap. He unialed the tape and put it in a small zipper case. Wendy silently applauded the head clerk who looked greatly relieved. Ullman looked like the type of man who might take any shortage out of the head clerk's hide without ever spilling a drop of blood. Wendy didn't much care for Ullman or his officious, ostentatiously bustling manner. He was like every boss she'd ever had, male or female. He would be saccharine sweet with the guests, a petty tyrant when he was backstage with the help. But now school was out and the head clerk's pleasure was written large on his face. It was out for everyone but she and Jack and Danny anyway.

"Mr. Terrance" Ullman called peremptorily. "Would you come over here, please?"

Jack walked over, nodding to Wendy and Danny that they were to come too.

The clerk, who had gone into the back, now came out again wearing an overcoat. "Have a pleasant winter, Mr. Ullman."

"I doubt it," Ullman said distantly. "May twelfth. Braddock. Not a day earlier. Not a day later."

"Yes, sir."

Braddock walked around the desk, his face sober and dignified as befitted his position, but when his back was entirely to Ullman he grinned like a schoolboy. He spoke briefly to the two girls still waiting by the door for their ride, and he was followed out by a brief burst of stifled laughter.

Now Wendy began to notice the silence of the place. It had fallen over the hotel like a heavy blanket muffling everything but

The first pulse of the afternoon wind came to her from where she stood she could look through the inner office, now seat to the point of sterility with its two bare desks and two sets of gray hanging chairs. Beyond that she could see Harrison's spotless kitchen, his big port-holed dough cutters propped open by rubber wedges.

"I thought I would take a few extra minutes and show you through the Hotel," Ullman said, and Wendy reflected that you could always hear that captain *H. P. Ullman's* voice. You were supposed to hear it. "I'm sure your husband will get to know the ins and outs of the Overlook quite well, Mrs. Torrance, but you and your son will doubtless keep more to the lobby level and the first floor, where your quarters are."

"Doubtless," Wendy murmured demurely, and Jack shot her a private glance.

"It's a beautiful place," Ullman said expansively. "I rather enjoy showing it off."

It let you do, Wendy thought.

"Let's go up to third and work our way down," Ullman said. He sounded positively enthused.

"If we're keeping you," Jack began.

"Not at all," Ullman said. "The shop is shut *T. A. fine* for this season, at least. And I plan to overnight in Boulder at the Boulderado, of course. Only decent hotel this side of Denver—except for the Overlook itself, of course. That's way."

They stepped into the elevator together. It was ornately scrolled in copper and brass, but it settled appreciably before Ullman pulled the gate across. Danny stirred a little uneasily, and Ullman soothed down at him. Danny tried to smile back without notable success.

"Don't you worry, little man," Ullman said. "Safe as houses."

"So was the *Titanic*," Jack said, looking up at the cut-glass globe in the center of the elevator ceiling. Wendy bit the inside of her cheek to keep the smile away.

Ullman was not amused. He slid the inner gate across with a rattle and a bang. "The *Titanic* made only one voyage, Mr. Torrance. This elevator has made thousands of them since it was installed in 1926."

"That's reassuring," Jack said. He ruffled Danny's hair. "The plane ain't gonna crash, doc."

Ullman threw the lever over, and for a moment there was noth-

ing but a shudder beneath their feet and the vertiginous sense of the motor below them. Wendy had a vision of the two of them being trapped between floors like flies in a bottle and found a little spring in her step while the cars and people glided by. Dinner Party

(Stop it!)

The elevator began to rise with some vibration and ceiling and hanging from below at first. Then the motor smoothed out. As the third floor lift man brought them to a bumpy stop, retracted the gate, and opened the door. The elevator car was still six inches below floor level. Danny gazed at the difference in height between the third floor rail and the elevator floor as if he had just sensed the universe was not as sane as he had been told. Lift man's throat has throat and raised the car a little brought it to a stop with a jerk. As two notes flew and they all climbed out. With her weight gone the car rebounded a must to floor level, something Wendy did not find reassuring at all. Safe as houses or no, she resolved to take the stairs when she had to go up or down in this place. And under no conditions would she allow her three of them to get into the rickety thing together.

What are you looking at, cow? Jack inquired humorously. "See any spots there?"

"Of course not," Lift man said, nettled. "All the rugs were shampooed just two days ago."

Wendy glanced down at the hall runner herself. Pretty but definitely not anything she would choose for her own home, if the day ever came when she had one. Deep blue pile it was entwined with what seemed to be a surrealistic jungle scene full of ropes and vines and trees filled with exotic birds. It was hard to tell just what sort of birds because all the overweaving was done in unshaded black giving in yashowettes.

"Do you like the rug?" Wendy asked Danny.

"Yes, Mom," he said colorlessly.

They walked down the hall which was comfortably wide. The wallpaper was silk, a lighter blue to go against the rug. Electric flambeaux stood at ten-foot intervals at a height of about seven feet. Fashioned to look like London gas lamps, the bulbs were masked behind cloudy cream-tinted glass that was framed with crisscrossing iron strips.

"I like those very much," she said.

U'lian picked up the Mr. Demme's house number and brought it to the Hotel after the war—number 147, I mean. In fact most—though not all—of the third-floor apartments were his idea. This is told the President's Suite.

He twisted his key in the lock of the rich oaky double doors and swung them wide. The spring rooms where was can exposure made them all gasp, which had probably been a very bad notion. He smiled. "Quite a view, isn't it?"

"It sure is," Jack said.

The window ran nearly the length of the spring room and beyond it the sun was poised directly between two snow-capped peaks, casting golden light across the rock faces and the sugared snow on the high peaks. The clouds around and behind this picture-postcard view were also tinted gold, and a sunbeam glistened skyward down into the darkly porticoed tiers below the timberline.

Jack and Wendy were so absorbed in the view that they didn't look down at Danny, who was staring not out the window but at the red-and-white-striped sick wa paper to the left, where a door opened into an interior bathroom. And his gasp, which had been mingled with theirs, had nothing to do with beauty.

Great splashes of dried blood flecked the gray bits of gray and white tissue, clotted the wa paper. It made Danny feel sick. It was like a crazy picture drawn in blood, a strange, sick etching of a man's face drawn back in terror and pain, the mouth yawning and half the head pulverized—

"So if you should see something—just look the other way and when you look back it'll be gone. Are you getting me?"

He deliberately looked out the window, being careful to show no expression on his face, and when his mother's hand closed over his own he took it, being careful not to squeeze it or give her a signal of any kind.

The manager was saying something to his daughter about making sure to shutter that big window so a strong wind wouldn't blow it in. Jack was nodding. Danny looked cautiously back at the wall. The big dried bloodstain was gone. Those little gray white flecks that had been scattered all through it—they were gone, too.

Then U'lian was leading them out. Mommy asked him if he thought the mountains were pretty. Danny said he did, although he didn't really care for the mountains one way or the other. As

Ullman was closing the door behind them, Danny looked back over his shoulder. The blond woman had returned, only now it was fresh. It was running. Ullman, looking directly at it, went on with his running commentary about the famous men who had stayed here. Danny discovered that he had bitten his lip hard enough to make it bleed, and he had never even felt it. As they walked on down the corridor, he felt a little bit behind the others and wiped the blood away with the back of his hand and thought about

(blood)

(Did Mr. Hootman see blood or was it something worse)

(*I don't think those things can hurt you.*)

There was an iron scream behind his lips, but he would not let it out. His mommy and daddy could not see such things, they never had. He would keep quiet. His mommy and daddy were loving each other, and that was a real thing. The other things were like pictures in a book. Some pictures were scary, but they couldn't hurt you. *They couldn't hurt you.*

Mr. Ullman showed them some other rooms on the third floor leading them through corridors that twisted and turned like a maze. They were all sweets up here. Mr. Ullman said, although Danny didn't see any candy. He showed them some rooms where a lady named Marilyn Monroe once stayed when she was married to a man named Arthur Miller. Danny got a vague understanding that Marilyn and Arthur had gotten a divorce not long after they were in the Overlook Hotel).

"Mommy?"

"What, honey?"

"If they were married, why don't they have different names? You and Daddy have the same names."

"Yes, but we're not famous. Danny, Jack said, "Famous women keep their same names even after they get married because their names are like bread and butter."

"Bread and butter?" Danny said, completely mystified.

"What Daddy means is that people used to like to go to the movies and see Marilyn Monroe. Wendy said, but they might not like to go to see Marilyn Miller."

"Why not? She'd still be the same lady. Wouldn't everyone know that?"

"Yes, but . . . She looked like Jack the plessy."

Truman came once straight to his room. I man entered
 the nursery. He opened the door. This was in my time. An aw-
 fully nice man. (Truman a baby-er.)

There was nothing remarkable in any of these rooms (except
 for the absence of sweets, which Mr. Uiman kept eating them),
 nothing that Danny was afraid of. In fact, there was only one
 thing in the third floor that bothered Danny, and he could
 not have said why. It was the fire extinguisher on the wall just be-
 fore they turned the corner and went back to the elevator, which
 was open and was like a mouthful of good teeth.

It was an old-fashioned extinguisher, a flat hose folded back a
 dozen times upon itself, the end attached to a large red valve, the
 end ending in a brass nozzle. The folds of the hose were secured
 with a red steel strap on a hinge. In case of a fire you could knock
 the steel strap up and out of the way with one hand push and the
 hose was yours. Danny could see that much; he was good at see-
 ing how things worked. By the time he was two and a half he had
 been unlocking the protective gate his father had installed at the
 top of the stairs in the Livingston house. He had seen how the
 lock worked. His daddy said it was a NACK. Some people had the
 NACK and some people didn't.

This fire extinguisher was a little bigger than others he had seen
 the one in the nursery school. For instance, but that was not so
 unusual. Nonetheless, it fixed him with faint unease, curled up
 there against the light blue wallpaper like a sleeping snake. And
 he was glad when it was out of sight at the corner.

Of course all the windows have to be shattered," Mr. Uiman
 said as they stepped back into the elevator. Once again the car
 sank quietly beneath their feet. But I'm particularly concerned
 about the one in the Presidential Suite. The original bill on that
 window was four hundred and twenty dollars, and that was over
 thirty years ago. It would cost eight times that to replace today."

"I'll shutter it," Jack said.

They went down to the second floor where there were more
 rooms and even more twists and turns in the corridor. The light
 from the windows had begun to fade appreciably now as the sun
 went behind the mountains. Mr. Uiman showed them one or two
 rooms and that was all. He walked past 2,2 the one Dick

Hal Horan had warned him about, without slowing Danny looked at the handle and number plate on the door with uneasy fascination.

Then down to the first floor. Mr. Ullman didn't show them into any rooms here until they had almost reached the blackly carpeted staircase that led down into the lobby again. "Here are your quarters," he said. "I think you'll find them adequate."

They went in. Danny was braced for whatever might be there. There was nothing.

Wendy Terrance felt a strong surge of relief. The President's Suite, with its cold elegance, had made her feel awkward and clumsy—it was all very well to visit some restored historical building with a bedroom plaque that announced Abraham Lincoln or Franklin D. Roosevelt had slept there, but as for anything entirely to imagine you and your husband lying beneath hangings of linen and perhaps making love where the greatest men in the world had once lain (the most powerful, anyway, she amended). But this apartment was simpler, homier, a most inviting. She thought she could abide this place for a season with no great difficulty.

"It's very pleasant," she said to Ullman, and heard the gratitude in her voice.

Ullman nodded. "Simple but adequate. During the season, this suite quarters the cook and his wife—or the cook and his apprentice."

"Mr. Hal Horan lived here?" Danny broke in.

Mr. Ullman inclined his head to Danny condescendingly. "Quite so. He and Mr. Never." He turned back to Jack and Wendy. "This is the sitting room."

There were several chairs that looked comfortable but not expensive, a coffee table that had once been expensive but now had a long chip gone from the side, two bookcases (stuffed full of Readers Digest Condensed Books and Detective Book Club trilogies from the forties. Wendy saw with some amusement), and an anonymous hotel TV that looked much less elegant than the buffed wood consoles in the rooms.

No kitchen, of course," Ullman said. "but there is a dumb-waiter. This apartment is directly over the kitchen." He slid aside a square of paneling and disclosed a wide, square tray. He gave it a push and it disappeared, trailing rope behind it.

"It's a secret passage!" Danny said excitedly to his mother, momentarily forgetting all fears in favor of that intoxicating shaft behind the wall. "Just like in *Abbott and Costello Meet the Monsters!*"

Mr. Lillman frowned but Wendy smiled indulgently. Danny ran over to the dumb-waiter and peered down the shaft.

"This way, please."

He opened the door on the far side of the living room. It gave on the bedroom, which was spacious and airy. There were two beds. Wendy looked at her husband, smiled, shrugged.

"No problem," Jack said. "We'll push them together."

Mr. Lillman looked over his shoulder, honestly puzzled. "Beg pardon?"

"The beds," Jack said pleasantly. "We can push them together."

"Oh, quite," Lillman said, momentarily confused. Then his face cleared and a red flush began to creep up from the collar of his shirt. "Whatever you like."

He led them back into the sitting room, where a second door opened on a second bedroom, this one equipped with bunk beds. A radiator clanked in one corner, and the rug on the floor was a hideous embroidery of western sage and cactuses. Danny had already fallen in love with it, Wendy saw. The walls of this smaller room were paneled in real pine.

"Think you can stand it in here, doc?" Jack asked.

"Sure I can. I'm going to sleep in the top bunk. Okay?"

"If that's what you want."

"I like the rug, too, Mr. Lillman, why don't you have all the rugs like that?"

Mr. Lillman looked for a moment as if he had sunk his teeth into a lemon. Then he smiled and patted Danny's head. "Those are your quarters," he said, "except for the bath, which opens off the main bedroom. It's not a huge apartment, but of course you have the rest of the hotel to spread out in. The lobby fireplace is in good working order, or so Watson tells me, and you must feel free to eat in the dining room if the spirit moves you to do so." He spoke in the tone of a man conferring a great favor.

"All right," Jack said.

"Shall we go down?" Mr. Lillman asked.

"Fine," Wendy said.

They went downstairs to the elevator and now the lobby was wholly deserted except for Watson, who was leaning against the main doors in a rawhide jacket, a toothpick between his lips.

"I would have thought you'd be miles from here by now, Mr. Ullman said, his voice slightly chilly.

"Just stuck around to remind Mr. Torrance here about the boiler," Watson said, straightening up. "Keep your good woman's eye on her file, and she'll be fine. Knock the brass down a couple of times a day. She creeps."

She creeps, Danny thought, and the words echoed down a long and silent corridor in his mind, a corridor lined with mirrors where people seldom looked.

"I will," his daddy said.

"You'll be fine," Watson said and offered Jack his hand. Jack shook it. Watson turned to Wendy and inclined his head. "Ma'am," he said.

"I'm pleased," Wendy said, and thought it would sound absurd. It didn't. She had come out here from New England where she had spent her life, and it seemed to her that in a few short sentences this man Watson, with his fluffy fringe of hair, had epitomized what the West was supposed to be all about. And never mind the lecherous wink earlier.

"Young master Torrance," Watson said gravely and put out his hand. Danny, who had known all about handshaking for almost a year now, put his own hand out gingerly and felt it swallowed up. "You take good care of em, Dan."

"Yes, sir."

Watson let go of Danny's hand and straightened up fully. He looked at Ullman. "See you next year, I guess," he said, and held his hand out.

Ullman touched it briefly. His pinky ring caught the lobby's electric light in a baleful sort of wink.

"May I see Mr. Watson," he said. "Not a day earlier or later?"

"Yes, sir," Watson said, and Jack could almost read the demand in Watson's mind: *you fuck ing hit a taggo.*

"Have a good winter, Mr. Ullman."

"Oh, I doubt it," Ullman said remotely.

Watson opened one of the two big main doors, the wind whined louder and began to flutter the collar of his jacket. "You folks take care now," he said.

It was Danny who answered: "Yes, s.r., we will."

Watson, whose not-so-distant ancestor had owned this place, slipped humbly through the door. It closed behind him, muffling the wind. Together they watched him clomp down the porch's broad front steps in his battered black cowboy boots. Bright yellow aspen leaves tumbled around his heels as he crossed the lot to his International Harvester pickup and climbed in. Blue smoke jetted from the rusted exhaust pipe as he started it up. The spell of silence held among them as he backed. Then pulled out of the parking lot. His truck disappeared over the brow of the hill and then reappeared smaller, on the main road, heading west.

For a moment Danny felt more lonely than he ever had in his life.

13

THE FRONT PORCH

The Torrance family stood together on the long front porch of the Overlook Hotel as if posing for a family portrait. Danny in the middle, zippered into last year's fall jacket which was now too small, and starting to come out at the elbow. Wendy behind him with one hand on his shoulder, and Jack to the left, his own hand resting lightly on his son's head.

Mr. Ulman was a step below them, his head into an expensive-looking brown mohair overcoat. The sun was entirely behind the mountains now, casting a glow with gold fire, making the shadows around things look long and purple. The only three vehicles left in the parking lots were the hotel truck, Ulman's Lincoln Continental, and the battered Torrance VW.

"You've got your keys, then," Ulman said. "Check, and you unders and fully about the furnace and the boiler."

Jack nodded, feeling some real sympathy for Ulman. Every-

thing was done for the season, the ball of string was neatly wrapped up until next May 12—not a day earlier or later—and Ullman, who was responsible for all of it and who referred to the hotel in the unmistakable tones of infatuation, could not help looking for loose ends.

"I think everything is well in hand," Jack said.

"Good. I'll be in touch." But he still lingered for a moment, as if waiting for the wind to take a hand and perhaps gust him down to his car. He sighed. "All right. Have a good winter, Mr. Torrance. Mrs. Torrance. You too, Danny."

"Thank you, sir," Danny said. "I hope you do, too."

"I doubt it," Ullman repeated, and he sounded sad. "The place in Florida is a dump. The out-and-out truth is to be spoken. Busywork. The Overlook is my real job. Take good care of it for me, Mr. Torrance."

"I think it will be here when you get back next spring," Jack said, and a thought flashed through Danny's mind

(but will we?)

and was gone.

"Of course. Of course it will."

Ullman looked out toward the playground where the hedge animals were cattering in the wind. Then he nodded once more in a businesslike way.

"Good-by, then."

He walked quickly and briskly across to his car—a ridiculously big one for such a little man—and tucked himself into it. The Lincoln's motor purred into life and the tail lights flashed as he pulled out of his parking stall. As the car moved away, Jack could read the small sign at the head of the stall: RESERVED FOR MR. ULLMAN. MGR.

"Right," Jack said softly.

They watched until the car was out of sight, headed down the eastern slope. When it was gone, the three of them looked at each other for a silent, almost frightened moment. They were alone. Aspen leaves whirled and skittered in aimless packs across the lawn that was now neatly mowed and tended for no guest's eyes. There was no one to see the autumn leaves steal across the grass but the three of them. It gave Jack a curious shivering feeling, as if his life force had unwinded to a mere spark while the hotel and

The giants had suddenly doubled in size and become sinister, dwarfing them with sudden awesome power.

Then Wendy said: "Look at you, doc! Your nose is running like a fire hose. Let's get inside!"

And they did, closing the door firmly behind them against the restless whine of the wind.

PART THREE

The Wasps' Nest

UP ON THE ROOF

"Oh, you good old trucking old man!"

Jack Terrance cited these words as in both surprise and agony as he slapped his right hand against his blue chambray work shirt, cursing the big, slow-moving wasp that had stung him. Then he was scrambling up the roof as fast as he could looking back over his shoulder to see if the wasp's brothers and sisters were rising from the nest he had uncovered and handle. If they were, it could be that the nest was between him and the gutter and he trap for reaching down into it with a new bucket from the inside. The trap was seventy feet from the roof in the common patio between the hotel and the lawn.

The gutter above the nest was still and undisturbed.

Jack was led a goose by between his feet as straddling the peak of the roof and examined his right index finger. It was swelling already and he appraised he would have to try and creep past the nest or else crawl down and put some ice on it.

It was Christmas Eve on a Dinky old pine down on the winter in the hotel truck can't be a running Dodge this was so much rushed by that the VW which was now wuzzing gently and seemed to be a lot of the colors of pink and blue. Christmas morning I was a lot of the colors of pink and blue when the snow would come to the. There had been a lot of snow and in some places there was a lot of snow. The truck was stuck with patch ice.

So far the fall had been a pretty good one. In the three weeks they had been here, garden day had followed garden day. Crisp thirty-degree mornings gave way to a warm sun per anise on the low latitudes the perfect temperature for sitting around on the Overlook's garden. The weather was so good and the sun was so good. Jack had a much better view of Wendy but he could have finished the job four days ago but he felt no real urge to hurry. The view from the hotel was so beautiful it was a lot of the colors of pink and blue.

was from the President's Speech, he decided. More important, the work itself was soothing. On the roof he felt himself reaching from the fresh old windows of the past three years. On the roof he felt a peace. Those three years began to seem like a farthing thing, more.

The shingles had been badly rotted, some of them blown away by last winter's storms. He had ripped them all up, yelling "Bombs away!" as he dropped them over the side, not wanting Denny to get hit in case he had wandered over. He had been pulling out bad flashing when the wasp had gotten him.

The real point was that he warned himself each time he climbed onto the roof to keep an eye out for nests; he had gotten that bug bomb last night. But this morning the restlessness and peace had been so complete that his watchfulness had lapsed. He had been back on the way of the play he was writing, forgetting everything but whatever scene he would be working on this morning in his head. The play was going very well, and although Wanda had said little, he knew she was pleased. He had been blocked in the crucial scene between Denker, the salesman, his master, and Gary Benson, his young hero, during he had been away six months at Sovington, months when the craving for a drink had been so bad that he could barely concentrate on his professional duties, let alone his extraordinary literary ambitions.

But on the last twelve evenings, as he actually sat down in front of the office machine and rewrote, he had borrowed from the fiction office downsides; the sound track had disappeared under his fingers as magically as cotton candy dissolves in the sun. He had come up a most effective play with the insights into Denker's character that he had always been lacking, and he had rewritten most of the script, the act after act, getting it revolved around the new scene. And the progress of the script, which he had been turning over in his mind when he was putting an end to day after day, was turning out better all the time. He thought he could rough it out in two weeks and have a clean copy of the whole damned play by New Year's.

He had an agent in New York, a tough red-headed woman named Phyllis Sancler who smoked Herbert Jaremski's drunk Jim Beam from a paper cup, and through the literary sun rose and set on Stan O'Casey. She had marketed three or four short stories,

including the *Equipe* piece. He had written earlier about the play which was called *The Little School*, describing the brutal conflict between Denker, a gifted student who had fallen out, becoming the brutal and brutalizing headmaster of a turn-of-the-century New England prep school, and Gury Benson, the student he sees as a younger version of himself. Phyllis had written back expressing interest and admonishing him to read O'Casey before sitting down to it. She had written again earlier that year asking where the hell was the play. He had written back wryly that *The Little School* had been indefinitely—and perhaps indefinitely—between hand and page. In that interesting, ironic, even Gothic, known as the writers' block. Now it looked as if she meant actually see the play. Whether or not it was any good or if it would ever see actual production was another matter. And he didn't seem to care a great deal about those things. He felt in a way that the play itself, the whole thing, was the roadblock, the dead symbol of the bad years at Stuyvesant Prep, the marriage he had almost totaled like a ratty kid behind the wheel of an old car, the monstrous assault on his son, the incident in the parking lot with George Hatfield, an incident he could no longer view as just another sudden and destructive flare of temper. He now thought that part of his drinking problem had stemmed from an unconscious desire to be free of Stuyvesant and the security he felt was stifling whatever creative urge he had. He had stopped drinking but the need to be free had been just as great. Hence George Hatfield. Now, if that remnant of those days was the play on the desk in his and Wendy's bedroom, and when it was done and sent off to Phyllis's home-in-the-wall New York agency, he could turn to other things. Not a novel, he was not ready to stumble into the swamp—an other three-year undertaking, but safely more short stories. Perhaps a book of them.

Moving warily, he scrambled back down the slope of the roof on his hands and knees past the line of demarcation where the fresh green Bird shingles gave way to the section of roof he had just finished clearing. He came to the edge on the left of the wasps' nest he had uncovered and moved gingerly toward it, ready to backtrack and beat down his ladder to the ground if things looked too hot.

He leaned over the section of pulled-off shingles and looked in

and what he had regarded his homework to forcing himself to do
 or even for a better future. How else could you explain the fact
 that had happened to him? For he said that the whole range of
 unhappy Saverton experiences had to be looked at with Jack
 Torrance in the passive mode. He had not done things things had
 been done to him. He had known plenty of people in the Saverton
 kitchen, two of them fought in the English Department who
 were bare drinkers. Zack Torrance was in the kitchen packing up a
 full keg of beer on Saturday afternoon, packing it in a barrel
 and working overnight and then kneeling near a fire on Sun-
 day watching football games and old movies. Yet through the
 week Zack was as sober as a priest and a weak drinker which was
 was an occasion.

He and Al Stuckey had been a school. They had sought each
 other out like two castoffs who were self-sufficient enough to prefer
 growing together to being alone. The sea had been where grain
 instead of salt that was all. Looking down at the wasps as they
 slowly went about their instinctual business before winter came
 down to kill them but their burning queen he would go further.
 He was still an alcoholic always would he perhaps had been
 since Sophomore Class Night in high school when he had taken
 his first drink. It had nothing to do with weakness or the mis-
 erable of drinking or the weakness or strength of his own character.
 There was a breaker switch somewhere inside or a circuit breaker
 had not work and he had been propelled down the chime with
 only slowly at first then accelerating as Saverton applied its
 pressures on him. A big greased side and at the bottom had been
 a shattered ownerless bicycle and a son with a broken arm. Jack
 Torrance in the passive mode. And his temper same thing. At his
 life he had been trying unsuccessfully to control it. He could
 remember himself a seven-spoken wheel once but later for play-
 ing with matches. He had gone out and had a nick at a passing
 car. His father had seen that and he had descended on him
 Jacky, roaring. He had redoubled Jack's behind and then
 kicked his eye. And when his father had gone into the house
 muttering to see what was on television, Jack had come upon a
 stray dog and had kicked it into the gutter. There had been tw-
 dozen fights in grammar school even more of them in high
 school winning two suspensions and one hundred detentions in

of the world. If he had possessed a proper upbringing, gathered peacefully with his kind people every morning of every day in a state of high peacefulness, every opposing hawk and snake peacefully. He had been a poor player, making a lot of noise in his youth and so on. Yes, and he knew perfectly well that he had his own hot temper, that he was not to blame. If he had not been so fast and fiery, he would have been a grudge match.

And yet, through it all, he hadn't felt like a son of a bitch. He hadn't even meant. He had a way, regarded himself as Jack, a strange, a really nice guy who was just going to have to learn how to cope with his temper, some way, but he'd got him in trouble. The same way he was going to have to learn how to cope with his drinking. But he had been an emotional, a complete, as you would say, he had been a physical one. The two of them were not the same. And neither somewhere deep inside him, where you'd just as soon not look. But it didn't much matter to him if the root causes were interrupted or separate, sociological, or psychological or psychological. He had had to deal with the results. He spoke now, he had been from his young man, the suspensions, with trying to explain the school clothes torn in playground brawls and after the hangovers, he slowly destroying part of his marriage, the empty bicycle wheel with its bent spokes pointing in the sky. Danvers had no son. And George Hatfield, of course.

He felt that he had unwittingly stuck his hand into The Great Wormy Nest of Life. As an image, I think. As a common, if really, he said it was servicable. He had stuck his hand through some rotted flooring in high summer and that hand and his whole arm had been consumed in his righteous fire, destroying everything that was in the concept of civilized behavior obsolete. Could you be expected to behave as a thinking human being when your hand was being impaled on red hot burning needles? Could you be expected to live on the love of your dearest and dearest when the brown worms could rise out of the hole in the fabric of things, like I know you thought was so innocent, and grow up straight at you? Could you be held responsible for your own actions as you ran crazily about on the sloping roof seventy feet above the ground, not knowing where you were going, not remembering that your poorly scrambling feet could not hold you, crashing

and he was lying right over the ranger's car and a small yard full of on the concrete seventy feet below Jack didn't think you could. When you saw it, only Jack's hand on the wasp's nest. Jack hadn't made a covenant with the devil to give up your love, respect, with its trappings of love and respect and honor. It just happened to you. Passively, with no say, you ceased to be a creature of the mind and became a creature of the nerve endings. From college-educated man to waiting ape in five easy seconds.

He thought about George Hatfield.

Tall and shaggy blond, George had been an almost irresistibly beautiful boy. In his tight-faded jeans and Stinsonton sweat shirt with the sleeves carelessly pushed up to the elbows to disclose his tanned forearms, he had reminded Jack of a young Robert Redford, and he admitted that George had much trouble scoring on more than that young football-playing devil Jack Torrance had ten years earlier. He could say that he honestly didn't feel jealous of George, or envy him his good looks, in fact, he had almost unconsciously begun to visualize George as the physical incarnation of his play hero, Gary Benson, the perfect foil for the dark, slumped, and aging Denker, who grew to hate Gary so much. But he, Jack Torrance, had never felt that way about George. If he had, he would have known it. He was quite sure of that.

George had floundered through his classes at Stinsonton. A sincere and baseball-star, his academic program had been fairly un-demanding and he had been content with C's and unimpassioned B's in history or botany. He was a fierce field contender but a lackadaisical, amused sort of student in the classroom. Jack was familiar with the type, more from his own days as a high school and college student than from his teaching experience, which was at second hand. George Hatfield was a jock. He could be a formidable, demanding figure in the classroom, but when the right set of competitive stimuli was applied, like electricity to the temples of Frankenstein's monster, Jack thought wistfully, he could become a juggernaut.

In January, George had tried out, with two dozen others, for the debate team. He had been quite frank with Jack. His father was a corporation lawyer, and he wanted his son to follow in his father's steps. George, who felt no burning call to do anything else, was winning. His grades were not top end, but this was official, only

dropped the ax. George had stayed after the others had filed out, and then had confronted Jack angrily.

"You s-set the timer ahead."

Jack looked up from the papers he was putting back into his briefcase.

"George, what are you talking about?"

"I did not get my whole five minutes. You set it ahead. I was wuh-watching the clock."

The clock and the timer may keep slightly different times. George bit his tongue when the dean on the damned thing Scout's honor."

"Yuh-yuh, you *did*?"

The hell-gerent, I'm sticking-up-for my rights way. George was looking at him had sparked Jack's own temper. He had been off the scene for two months, two months too long, and he was rugged. He made one last effort to hold himself in. "I assure you I did not, George. It's your stutter. Do you have any idea what causes it? You don't stutter in class."

I duh-duh-don't s-s-st st-stutter!"

"Lower your voice."

"You w-want to g-get on? You s-s-st s-s-st w-want me on your g-g-goddam team!"

Lower your voice, I said. Let's discuss this rationally."

"F-f-fuck th-that!"

"George, if you can control your stutter, I'd be glad to have you. You're well-prepped for every practice and you're good at the background stuff, which means you're rarely surprised. But all that doesn't mean much if you can't control that—"

"I've neh-neh-never stuttered!" he cried out. "It's yuh-you! I wish sub-someone else had the d-d-deb-debate team. I could—"

Jack's temper seeped another notch.

"George, you're never going to make much of a lawyer, corporation or otherwise, if you can't control this. Law isn't like soccer. Two hours of practice every night won't cut it. What are you going to do stand up in front of a board meeting and say, 'Nuh-nu-nuh, g-gentlemen, about this t-t-tort?'"

He suddenly flushed, not with anger but with shame at his own cruelty. This was not a man in front of him but a seventeen-year-old boy who was facing the first major defeat of his life, and

man he asked in the hallway, he could for Jack help him find a way to cope with it.

George gave him a first-furtive glance. His lips twinged and blinking as the words bubbled up behind them struggled to find their way out.

"Yuh-yuh you see set it ahead. You hah-hate me but because you nah-nah-ah know . . . you know . . . nah-nah."

With an unrepentant cry he had rushed out of the classroom, slamming the door hard enough to make the wire-reinforced glass rattle in its frame. Jack had stood there, feeling, rather than hearing, the echo of George's Ad-dus in the empty hall. Still as the grip on his temper and his shame at making George's stutter his first thought had been a sick sort of exaltation. For the first time in his life George Hatfield had wanted something he could not have. For the first time there was something wrong that all of Daddy's money could not fix. You couldn't bribe a speech center. You couldn't offer a tongue an extra fifty a week and a bonus at Christmas if it would agree to stop flopping like a record needle in a defective groove. Then the exaltation was simply buried in shame, and he felt the way he had after he had broken Danny's arm.

Dear God, I am not a son or a bitch. Please.

That sick happiness at George's retreat was more typical of Denker in the play than of Jack Torrance the playwright.

You hate me because you know . . .

Because he knew what?

What could he possibly know about George Hatfield that would make him hate him? That his whole future lay ahead of him? That he looked a little bit like Robert Redford and all conversation among the girls stopped when he did a double gainer from the pool diving board? That he played soccer and baseball with a natural, unlearned grace?

Ridiculous. Absolutely absurd. He envied George Hatfield nothing. If the truth was known, he felt worse about George's unfortunate stutter than George himself because George really would have made an excellent debater. And if Jack had set the timer ahead—and of course he hadn't—it would have been because both he and the other members of the squad were embarrassed for George's struggle; they had agonized over it the way

you agonize when the Class Night speaker forgets some of his lines. If he had set the timer ahead, it would have been just to put George out of his misery.

But he hadn't set the timer ahead. He was quite sure of it.

A week later he had cut him, and that time he had kept his temper. The shouts and the threats had all been on George's side. A week after that he had gone out to the parking lot halfway through practice to get a pile of sourcebooks that he had left in the trunk of the VW and there had been George, down on one knee with his long blond hair swinging in his face, a hunting knife in one hand. He was sawing through the VW's right front tire. The back tires were already shredded, and the bug sat on the flats like a small, tired dog.

Jack had seen red, and remembered very little of the encounter that followed. He remembered a thick growl that seemed to issue from his own throat. "All right, George. If that's how you want it, just come here and take your medicine."

He remembered George looking up, startled and fearful. He had said "Mr. Torrance—" as if to explain how all this was just a mistake. The tires had been flat when he got there and he was just cleaning dirt out of the front treads with the tip of the gutting knife he just happened to have with him and—

Jack had waded in, his fists held up in front of him, and it seemed that he had been grinning. But he wasn't sure of that.

The last thing he remembered was George holding up the knife and saying "You better not come any closer."

And the next thing was Miss Strong, the French teacher, holding Jack's arms, crying, screaming "Stop it, Jack! Stop it! You're going to kill him!"

He had blinked around stupidly. There was the hunting knife gleaming harmlessly on the parking lot asphalt four yards away. There was his Volkswagen, his poor old battered bug, veering off many wild midnight drunken rides, sitting on three flat shoes. There was a new dent in the right front fender he saw, and there was something in the middle of the dent that was either red paint or blood. For a moment he had been confused, his thoughts

Jesus Christ, all we hit him after all.

Of that other night. Then his eyes had settled on George. George lying dazed and blinking on the asphalt. His debate group had

come out and they were huddled together by the door, staring at George. There was blood on his face from a scalp laceration that looked minor, but there was also blood running out of one of George's ears and that probably meant a concussion. When George tried to get up, Jack shook free of Miss Strong and went to him. George cringed.

Jack put his hands on George's chest and pushed him back down. "Lie still," he said. "Don't try to move." He turned to Miss Strong, who was staring at them both with horror.

"Please go call the school doctor, Miss Strong," he told her. She turned and fled toward the office. He looked at his debate class then, looked them right in the eye because he was in charge again, fully himself, and when he was himself there wasn't a nicer guy in the whole state of Vermont. Surely they knew that.

"You can go home now," he told them quietly. "We'll meet again tomorrow."

But by the end of that week six of his debaters had dropped out. Two of them he classed as he acts, but of course it didn't matter much because he had been informed by them that he would be dropping out himself.

Yes, somehow he had stayed off the bottle and he supposed that was something.

And he had not hated George H. Field. He was sure of that. He had not acted but had been acted upon.

You hate me because you know . . .

But he had known nothing. *Nothing*. He would swear that before the Throne of Almighty God, just as he would swear that he had set the timer ahead no more than a minute. And not out of hate but out of pity.

Two wasps were crawling suggestively about on the roof beside the hole in the flashing.

He watched them until they spread their aerodynamically unsound but strangely efficient wings and lumbered off into the October sunshine, perchance to sting someone else. God had seen fit to give them stingers and Jack supposed they had to use them on somebody.

How long had he been sitting here, looking at that hole with its unpleasant surprise down inside, rasping over old coals? He looked at his watch. Almost half an hour.

He let himself down to the edge of the roof, dropped one leg over, and felt around until his foot found the top rung of the ladder just below the overhang. He would go down to the equipment shed where he had stored the bug bomb on a high shelf out of Danny's reach. He would get it, come back up, and then they would be the ones surprised. You could be stung, but you could also sting back. He believed that sincerely. Two hours from now the nest would be just so much chewed paper and Danny could have it in his room if he wanted to—Jack had had one in his room when he was just a kid. It had always smelled faintly of woodsmoke and gasoline. He could have it right by the head of his bed. It wouldn't hurt him.

"I'm getting better."

The sound of his own voice, confident in the silent afternoon, reassured him even though he hadn't meant to speak aloud. He *was* getting better. It was possible to graduate from passive to active, to take the thing that had once driven you nearly to madness as a neutral prize of no more than occasional academic interest. And if there was a place where the thing could be done, this was surely it.

He went down the ladder to get the bug bomb. They would pay. They would pay for stinging him.

15

DOWN IN THE FRONT YARD

Jack had found a huge white-painted wicker chair in the back of the equipment shed two weeks ago, and had dragged it around to the porch over Wendy's objections that it was really the ugliest thing she had ever seen in her whole life. He was sitting in it now, amusing himself with a copy of E. L. Doctorow's *Welcome to Hard Times*, when his wife and son rattled up the driveway in the hotel truck.

Wendy parked it on the turn-around race. The engine sportily and then turned it off. The truck's single taillight died. The engine rumbled grumpily with post-ignition and finally stopped. Jack got out of his chair and ambled down to meet them.

"Hi Dad! Danny called and raced up the hill. He had a box in one hand. "Look what Mommy brought me!"

Jack picked his son up, swung him around twice, and kissed him heartily on the mouth.

Jack Terrance, the Eugene O'Neill of his generation, the American Shakespeare. Wendy said smiling. Fancy meeting you here so far up in the mountains.

"The common rock became the rock for me, dear lady," he said, and slipped his arms around her. They kissed. "How was your trip?"

"Very good. Danny complains that I keep jerking him but I didn't stall the truck once and . . . oh, Jack, you finished it."

She was looking at the roof and Danny followed her gaze. A faint frown touched his face as he looked at the wide swath of fresh shingles atop the Overlook's west wing, a lighter green than the rest of the roof. Then he looked down at the box in his hand and his face cleared again. At night the pictures Tony had showed him came back to haunt him in their original clarity, but in sunny daylight they were easier to disregard.

"Look, Daddy, look!"

Jack took the box from his son. It was a model car, one of the Big Daddy Roth caricatures that Danny had expressed an admiration for in the past. This one was the Violent Violet Volkswagen, and the picture on the box showed a huge purple VW with long 59 Cadillac Coupe de Ville taillights burning up a dirt track. The VW had a smooch and poking up through it, clawed hands on the wheel, even he saw, was a gothic warty monster with popping fangs, red eyes, a maniac grin, and a giant English bulldog up turned around backward.

Wendy was smiling at them and Jack winked at her.

"That's what I like about you, Dad," Jack said, handing the box back. "Your taste runs to the queer, the sober, the unexpected. You are definitely the child of my dreams."

"Mommy said you'd be home put it together as soon as I could read all of the first Dick and Jane."

"That ought to be by the end of the week," Jack said. "What else have you got in that fine-looking truck and am?"

"Uh-huh." She grabbed his arm and pulled him back. "No peeking. Some of the stuff is for you. Danny and I will take it. You can get the milk. It's on the floor or he can."

"That's all I am to you," Jack cried, clapping a hand to his forehead. "Just a dray horse, a common beast of the field. Dray here, dray there, dray everywhere."

"Just dray that milk right into the kitchen, mister."

"It's too much!" he cried, and threw himself on the ground while Danny stood over him and giggled.

"Get up, you ox," Wendy said, and produced him with the toe of her sneaker.

"See?" he said to Danny. "She called me an ox. You're a witness."

"Witness, witness." Danny concurred gleefully and broad-jumped his prone father.

Jack sat up. That reminds me, charming. I've got something for you, too. On the porch by my ass, say."

"What is it?"

"Forgot. Go and see."

Jack got up and he and Wendy stood together watching Danny charge up the lawn and then take the steps to the porch two by two. He put an arm around Wendy's waist.

"You happy, babe?"

She looked up at him solemnly. "This is the happiest I've been since we were married."

"Is that the truth?"

"God's honest."

He squeezed her tightly. "I love you."

She squeezed him back, touched. Those had never been cheap words with John Lorraine, she was even the number of times he had said them to her before he and after marriage on both her hands.

"I love you too."

"Mummy! Mummy!" Danny was on the porch now, shouting excited. "Come and see! Wow! It's neat!"

"What's it?" Wendy asked him as they walked up from the parking lot, hand in hand.

"Forgot," Jack said.

"Oh, you'll get yours," she said, and elbowed him. "See if you don't."

"I was hoping I'd get it tonight," he remarked, and she argued. A moment later he asked, "Is Danny happy, do you think?"

"You ought to know. You're the one who has a long talk with him every night before bed."

"That's usually about what he wants to be when he grows up or if Santa Claus is real or not. That's getting to be a big thing with him. I think his old buddy Scott let some peepers drop on that one. No, he hasn't said much of anything about the Overlook to me."

"Neither," she said. They were climbing the porch steps now. But he's very quiet a lot of the time. And I think he's lost weight, Jack, I really do."

"He's just getting tall."

Danny's back was to them. He was examining something on the table by Jack's chair, but Wendy couldn't see what it was.

He's not eating as well, either. He used to be the original steam shovel. Remember last year?"

"They taper off," he said vaguely. "I think I read that in Spock. He'll be using two forks again by the time he's seven."

They had stopped on the top step.

"He's pushing awfully hard on those readers, too," she said. "I know he wants to learn how, to please us, to please you," she added reluctantly.

"To please himself most of all," Jack said. "I haven't been pushing him on that at all. In fact, I do wish he wouldn't go quite so hard."

"Would you think I was foolish if I made an appointment for him to have a physical? There's a G.P. in Sidewinder, a young man from what the checker in the market said."

"You're a little nervous about the snow coming, aren't you?"

She shrugged. "I suppose. If you think it's foolish."

"I don't. In fact, you can make appointments for all three of us. We'll get our clean bills of health and then we can sleep easy at night."

"I'll make the appointments this afternoon," she said.

"Mom, Look, Mommy!"

He came running to her with a large gray thing in his hands,

and for one comic horrible moment Wendy thought it was a brain. She saw what it really was and recoiled instinctively.

Jack put an arm around her. "It's all right. The tenants who didn't fly away have been shaken out. I used the bug bomb."

She looked at the large wasps' nest her son was holding but would not touch it. "Are you sure it's safe?"

"Positive. I had one in my room when I was a kid. My dad gave it to me. Want to put it in your room, Danny?"

"Yeah! Right now!"

He turned around and raced through the double doors. They could hear his muffled, running feet on the main stairs.

"There were wasps up there," she said. "Did you get stung?"

"Where's my purple heart?" he asked, and displayed his finger. The swelling had already begun to go down, but she ooked over it sadly and gave it a small, gentle kiss.

"Did you pull the stinger out?"

"Wasps don't leave them in. That's bees. They have barbed stingers. Wasp stingers are smooth. That's what makes them so dangerous. They can sting again and again."

"Jack, are you sure that's safe for him to have?"

"I followed the directions on the bomb. The stuff is guaranteed to kill every single bug in two hours' time and then disappear with no residue."

"I hate them," she said.

"What . . . wasps?"

"Anything that stings," she said. Her hands went to her elbows and cupped them, her arms crossed over her breasts.

"I do too," he said, and hugged her.

16

DANNY

Down the hall, in the bedroom. Wendy could hear the typewriter Jack had carried up from downstairs burst into life for thirty seconds, fall silent for a minute or two, and then rattle briefly again. It was like listening to machine-gun fire from an isolated pill box.

he said was made to her ears. Jack had not been writing so much since the second year of their marriage when he wrote the story that *Empire* had purchased. He said he brought the play with him by the end of the year for better or worse and he would be moving on to something new. He said he didn't care if *For Little School* started any excitement when Paving showed it around. I don't care if it sank without a trace and Wendy he said that too. The actual act of his writing made her immensely hopeful not because she expected great things from the play but because her husband seemed to be slowly closing a huge door on a roomful of monsters. He had had his shoulder to the door for a long time now but at last it was swinging shut.

Every key typed closed it a little more.

"Look Dick, look."

Danny was hunched over the first of the five battered primers Jack had dug up by sifting through crates of children's misadventures and backshops. They would take Danny right up to the second-grade reading level, a program she had told Jack he thought was much too ambitious. Their son was not proof they knew that but it would be a mistake like to push him so far too far. Jack had agreed. There would be no playing around. But if the boys caught on fast they would be prepared. And now he wondered if Jack hadn't been right about that too.

Danny, prepared by four years of "See me Street" and three years of "Electric Company" seemed to be catching on with an almost scary speed. He hunched over the innocuous little books, his crystal radio and his tape player on the shelf above him as though his life depended on learning to read. His small face was more tense and paler than she liked in the close and cozy glow of the kerosene-lit lamp they had put in his room. He was taking it very seriously. When he reached near the workbooks pressed his mother made up for him every afternoon. Picture of an apple and a peach. The words *apple* and *peach* written beneath in Jack's large neatly made printing. (Here the right picture, he said, but we wish the word.) And these were words came from the word of the pictures his arms moving scanning and slowly searching them out. And with his down-sized red pencil curled into his pulley right hand he could now write about three dozen words on his own.

He fingered the words under his words on the regular. Above

there was a picture Wendy said remembered from her own grammar school days, nineteen years before. A laughing boy with brown curly hair. A girl in a short dress, her hair in blonde ringlets, one hand holding a jump rope. A fat young dog running after a large red rubber ball. The first grade memory Dick June, and a picture of a boy and a girl.

"See Jip run!" Danny read slowly. "Run, Jip, run. Run, run, run. He p...se", dropping his finger down. "See the...". He bent closer, his nose almost touching the page now. "See the...".

"Not so close, doc," Wendy said quietly. "You'll hurt your eyes. It's—"

"Don't tell me," he said sitting up with a jerk. His voice was strained. "Don't tell me, Mommy, I can get it."

"All right, honey," she said. "But it's not a big thing. Really it's not."

Unheeding Danny went forward again. On his face was an expression that might be more commonly seen hovering over a graduate record exam in a college gym somewhere. She asked it less and less.

"See the... huh. Aw. E. E. See he buhaw-c-c-c-c! See the buhaw. *Boil!*" Suddenly triumphant. Face like darkness in his voice scared her. "*See the bull!*"

"That's right," she said. "Honey, I think that's enough for tonight."

"A couple more pages, Mommy. Please?"

"No, doc. She closed the red-bound book firmly. "It's bedtime."

"Please?"

"Don't tease me about it, Danny. Mommy's tired."

"Okay." But he looked longingly at the primer.

"Go kiss your father and then wash up. Don't forget to brush."

"Yeah."

He slouched out, a small boy in pajama bottoms with feet on the large flannel top with a football on the front and NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS written on the back.

Jack's typewriter stopped, and she heard Danny's hearty smack. "Night, Daddy."

"Goodnight, doc. How'd you do?"

"Okay, I guess. Mommy made me stop."

"Yes?"

"Yes?"

He said, "I'm going to the market for carrots and chives and—"

She said, "I'm going to the market for carrots and chives and—"

Her eyes fell on the wasps' nest

It had the ultimate high price in Danny's room, resting on a large plate on the table by his bed. She didn't like it even if it was empty. She wondered vaguely if it might have germs

he might ask Jack then decided he would laugh at her. But he would ask the doctor tomorrow, if she could catch him with Jack out of the room. She didn't like the idea of that thing, constructed from the chewings and spivs of so many alien creatures lying within a foot of her sleeping son's head.

The water in the bathroom was still running, and she got up and went into the big bedroom to make sure everything was okay. Jack didn't look up, he was lost in the world he was making staring at the typewriter, a cigar clamped in his teeth.

She knocked lightly on the closed bathroom door. "You okay, Dad? You awake?"

No answer

"Danny?"

No answer. She tried the door. It was locked.

"Danny?" She was worried now. The lack of any sound beneath the steadily running water made her uneasy. "Danny? Open the door, honey."

No answer

"Danny!"

"Jesus Christ Wendy, I can't think if you're going to pound on the door all night."

Danny's locked himself in the bathroom and he doesn't answer me!"

Jack came around the desk, looking put out. He knocked on the door once, hard. "Open up, Danny. No games."

No answer.

Jack knocked harder. "Stop for a minute. Beat me's beat me. Spanking if you don't open up."

He's losing his temper, she thought, and was more afraid. He had not touched Danny in anger since that evening two years ago, but at this moment he sounded angry enough to do so.

"Danny, honey—" she began.

No answer. Only running water.

"Danny, if you make me break this lock I can guarantee you you'll spend the night sleeping on your belly." Jack warned.

Nothing.

"Break it," she said, and suddenly it was hard to talk. "Quick."

He raised one foot and brought it down hard against the door.

at the top of the knob. The lock was a poor thing — gave some wobble and the door would re-open, banging, he could hear it, all and rebounding halfway.

"Danny!" she screamed.

The water was running full force in the basin. Her face, a pale of crest with the ap — If Danny was sitting on the rim of the bathtub across the room, his toothbrush crisscrossed limp in his hand, a thin foam of toothpaste around his mouth. He was staring, trance-like, into the mirror on the front of the medicine cabinet above the washbasin. The expression on his face was not of dragged horror, and her first thought was that he was having some sort of epileptic seizure, that he might have swallowed his tongue.

"Danny!"

Danny didn't answer. Guttural sounds came from his throat.

Then she was pushed aside so hard that she crashed into the towel rack, and Jack was kneeling in front of the boy.

"Danny," he said. "Danny, Danny." He snapped his fingers in front of Danny's blank eyes.

At last, Danny said. "Eummmmm, play Snake. Nutter."

"Danny—"

"Roque!" Danny said, his voice suddenly deep, almost male. "Roque Stroke. The roque mallet — has two sides. *Quadrant*."

"Oh Jack my God *what's wrong with him?*"

Jack grabbed the boy's elbows and shook him hard. Danny's head rolled limply backward and then snapped forward like a balloon on a stick.

"Roque, Stroke, Redrum."

Jack shook him again, and Danny's eyes suddenly cleared. His toothbrush fell out of his hand and onto the tiled floor with a small click.

"What?" he asked, looking around. He saw his father kneeling before him, Wendy standing by the wall. "What?" Danny asked again, with rising alarm. "W-W Wendy. What's wrong?"

"Don't matter!" Jack suddenly screamed into his face. Danny cried out in shock, his body going tense, trying to draw away from his father, and then he collapsed into tears. Stricken Jack pulled him close. "Oh, honey, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, doc. Please. Don't cry. I'm sorry. Everything's okay."

The water ran ceaselessly in the bath, and Wendy felt that she had suddenly stepped into some grimacing nightmare where things run backward, backward to the time when her drunken husband had taken her son's arm and said the terrible words, more or less, almost the exact same words.

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, do. Please, I'm sorry.

She ran to him, he surprised Danny out of Jack's arms somehow. He saw the look of angry reproach on his face but flew away for later consideration and fled him up. She walked him back to the small bedroom. Danny's arms clasped around her neck, Jack trailing them.

She sat down on Danny's bed and rocked him back and forth, soothing him with nonsense, words repeated over and over. She looked up at Jack and there was no worry in his eyes now. His usual questioning eyebrows at her. She shook her head faintly.

"Danny," she said. "Danny, Danny, Danny. 'S okay, do. 'S fine."

And Danny was quite only faintly reminding her of him. So it was Jack he spoke to now. Jack who was now sitting beside them on the bed, and she felt the old faint pang.

"It's him first and it's always been him first."

Of jealousy Jack had shared at him, she had comforted him, yet it was to his father that Danny said,

"I'm sorry if I was bad."

"Nothing to be sorry for, do." Jack ruffled his hair. "What the hell happened to there?"

Danny shook his head slowly, dazed. "I . . . I don't know. Why did you tell me it's just starting, Daddy. I don't stop."

"Of course not," Jack said heartily, but Wendy felt a cold finger touch her heart. Jack suddenly looked scared, as if he'd seen something that might just have been a ghost.

Something about the mother. Danny murmured.

Now Jack was leaning forward, and Danny flinched in her arms.

"Jack, you're scaring him!" she said, and her voice was high, accusatory. "I suddenly came to her that they were all scared. But of what?"

"I don't know. I don't know." Danny was saying to his father. "What . . . what did I say, Daddy?"

Nothing," Jack muttered. He took his handkerchief from his back pocket and wiped his mouth with it. Wendy had a moment of that sickening, me-as-running-backward feeling again. It was a gesture she remembered well from his drinking days.

"Why did you lock the door, Danny?" she asked gently. "Why did you do that?"

"Tony," he said. "Tony told me to."

They exchanged a glance over the top of his head.

"Did Tony say why, son?" Jack asked quickly.

"I was brushing my teeth and I was thinking about my reading," Danny said. "Thinking real hard. And . . . and I saw Tony way down in the mirror. He said he had to show me again."

"You mean he was behind you?" Wendy asked.

"No, he was *in* the mirror," Danny was very emphatic on this point. "Way down deep. And then I went through the mirror. The next thing I remember Daddy was shaking me and . . . (though, I was being bad again.)"

Jack winced as if struck.

"No, doc," he said quietly.

"Tony told you to lock the door?" Wendy asked, brushing his hair.

"Yes."

"And what did he want to show you?"

Danny tensed in her arms, it was as if the muscles in his body had turned into something like piano wire. "I don't remember," he said disheartened. "I don't remember. Don't ask me. I . . . *I don't remember nothing!*"

"Shh," Wendy said, alarmed. She began to rock him again. "It's all right if you don't remember, hon. Sure it is."

At last Danny began to relax again.

"Do you want me to stay a little while? Read you a story?"

"No. Just the night light." He looked shyly at his father.

"Would you stay, Daddy? For a minute?"

"Sure, doc."

Wendy sighed. "I'll be in the living room, Jack."

"Okay."

She got up and watched as Danny slid under the covers. He seemed very small.

"Are you sure you're okay, Danny?"

"I'm okay. Just go on Snoopy, Mom."

"Sure."

She walked in the night light which he had left on, and first asleep on top of his doghouse. He had never wanted a night light and they moved into the Overlook, and then he had specifically requested one. She turned off the lamp and the overhead and looked back at him, the small white crescent of Danny's face, and Jack's above it. She hesitated a moment.

(and then I went through the mirror,

and then left them quietly

"You sleepy?" Jack asked, brushing Danny's hair off his forehead.

"Yeah."

"Want a drink of water?"

"No."

There was a hole in the mattress. Danny was still beneath his hand. Thinking the boy had dropped off, he was about to get up and leave quietly when Danny said, "out of a drink of sleep."

"Roque."

Jack turned back, all zero at the bone.

"Danny—?"

"You'd never hurt Mommy, would you, Daddy?"

"No."

"Or me?"

"No."

Silence again, spinning out.

"Daddy?"

"What?"

"Tony came and told me about you us."

"Did he, doe? What did he say?"

"I don't remember much. Except he said I was in a wings. Like baseball. Isn't that funny?"

"Yes." Jack's heart was thudding dutifully in his chest. How could the boy possibly know a thing like that? Roque was played by wings, not the baseball, but like cricket.

"Daddy—?" He was almost asleep now.

"What?"

"What's redrum?"

"Redrum sounds like something an Indian might take on the warpath."

Silence

"Hey, doc?"

But Danny was asleep, breathing in long, slow strokes. Jack sat looking down at him for a moment, and a rush of love pushed through him like hot water. Why had he yelled at the boy like that? It was perfectly normal for him to stutter a little. He had been coming out of a daze or some weird kind of trance, and stuttering was perfectly normal under those circumstances. Perfectly. And he hadn't said *never* at all. It had been something else, nonsense, gibberish.

How had he known roque was played in innings? Had someone told him? Lilman? Hanorann?

He looked down at his hands. They were made into tight clenched fists of tension.

(god how i need a drink)

and the nails were digging into his palms like tiny brands. Slowly he forced them to open.

"I love you, Danny," he whispered. "God knows I do."

He left the room. He had lost his temper again, only a little, but enough to make him feel sick and afraid. A drink would blunt that feeling, oh yes. It would blunt that.

(Something about the timer)

and everything else. There was no mistake about those words at all. None. Each had come out clear as a bell. He paused in the hallway, looking back, and automatically wiped his lips with his handkerchief.

* * *

Their shapes were only dark silhouettes in the glow of the night light. Wendy, wearing only panties, went to his bed and tucked him in again, he had kicked the covers back. Jack stood in the doorway, watching as she put her inner wrist against his forehead.

"Is he feverish?"

"No." She kissed his cheek.

"Thank God you made that appointment," he said as she came back to the doorway. "You think that guy knows his stuff?"

(then **REDRLM**)

(Come out here and take your medicine you fucking crybaby!)

Oh and he could hear the owner of that voice coming down for him, charging up the hall like a tiger in an alien blue-black jungle. A man-enter

(Come out here you little shit you bitch)

If he could go to the stairs going down, if he could get off this third floor, he might be all right. Even the elevator. If he could remember what had been forgotten. But it was dark and in his terror he had lost his orientation. He had turned down one corridor and then another, his heart leaping into his mouth like a hot lump of ice, fearing that each turn would bring him face to face with the human tiger in those halls.

The booming was right behind him now, the awful hoarse shouting.

The whistle the head of the mallet made cutting through the air
roque stroke roque stroke **REDRLM!**

It burst it crashed into the wall. The soft whisper of feet on the angle carpet. Panic squirting in his mouth like bitter juice.

(How will I remember what was forgotten? What would he? What was it?)

He fled around another corner and saw with creeping, utter horror that he was in a cul-de-sac. Locked doors frowned down at him from three sides. The west wing. He was in the west wing and outside he could hear the storm whipping and screaming, seeming to choke on its own dark throat filled with snow.

He backed up against the wall, weeping with terror now, his heart racing like the heart of a rabbit caught in a snare. When his back was against the light blue silk wallpaper with the embossed pattern of wavy lines, his legs gave way and he collapsed to the carpet, hands spread on the tangle of woven vines and creepers, the breath whistling in and out of his throat.

Louder. Louder.

There was a tiger in the hall and now the tiger was at the corner, snarling, bellowing, shrieling and peering and snarling, rage, the roque mallets coming because his legs were on wobbly legs and it was—

He woke with a sudden, withdrawing spasm, going bolt upright in

bed, eyes wide and glaring into the darkness, hands crossed in front of his face.

Something on one hand. Crawling.

Wasps. Three of them.

They stung him then, seeming to needle all at once, and that was when all the images broke apart and fell on him in a dark flood and he began to shake into the dark, the wasps clinging to his left hand, stinging again and again.

The lights went on and Daddy was standing here in his shorts, his eyes glaring. Mommy behind him, sleepy and scared.

Get them off me! Danny screamed.

"Oh my God," Jack said. He saw

"Jack, what's wrong with him? It has to be wrong!"

He didn't answer her. He ran to the bed, scooped up Danny's pillow and slapped Danny's thrashing leg hard with it. Again. Again. Wendy saw umbrine insectile forms rise into the air, drowning.

"Get a magazine!" he yelled over his shoulder. "Kill them!"

"Wasps?" she said, and for a moment she was inside herself, almost detached in her realization. That her mind cross-patched and knowledge was connected to emotion. "Wasps, oh Jesus, Jack, you said—"

"*Shut the fuck up and kill them!*" he roared. "*Or I vow to what I say!*"

One of them had landed on Danny's reading desk. She tore a coloring book off his worktable and slammed it down on the wasp. It left a vicious brown smear.

There's another one on the ceiling, he said, and he set past her with Danny in his arms.

He took the boy into the bedroom and put him on Wendy's side of the makeshift double bed. He sat there. Danny. Don't come back until I tell you. Understand?"

His face puffed and streaked with tears, Danny nodded.

"That's my brave boy."

Jack ran back down the hall to the stairs. He told him he heard the coloring book slap twice, and then his wife screamed in pain. He didn't slow but went down the stairs, two by two, into the darkened lobby. He went through Lillian's office into the kitchen,

slamming the heavy part of his thigh into the corner of Ulman's oak desk, barely feeling it. He slapped on the kitchen overheads and crossed to the sink. The washed dishes from supper were still heaped up in the drainer, where Wendy had left them to drip-dry. He snatched the big Pyrex bowl off the top. A dish fell to the floor and exploded. Ignoring it, he turned and ran back through the office and up the stairs.

Wendy was standing outside Danny's door, breathing hard. Her face was the color of table linen. Her eyes were shiny and flat, her hair hung damply against her neck. "I got a . of them," she said dully, "but one stung me. Jack, you said they were all dead." She began to cry.

He slipped past her without answering and carried the Pyrex bowl over to the nest by Danny's bed. It was still. Nothing there. On the outside, anyway. He slammed the bowl down over the nest.

"There," he said. "Come on."

They went back into their bedroom.

"Where did it go, you?" He asked her.

"My . . . on my wrist."

"Let's see."

She showed it to him. Just above the bracelet of . . . es between wrist and palm, there was a small circular hole. The flesh around it was puffing up.

"Are you allergic to stings?" he asked. "Think hard! If you are, Danny might be. The fucking little bastards got him five or six times."

"No," she said, more calmly. "I . . . I just hate them, that's all. Hate them."

Danny was sitting on the foot of the bed, holding his left hand and looking at them. His eyes, circled with the white of shock, looked at Jack reproachfully.

"Daddy, you said you killed them all. My wrist . . . it really hurts."

"Let's see it, and . . . no, I'm not going to touch it. That would make it hurt even more. Just hold it out."

He did and Wendy moaned. "Oh, Danny, . . . oh, your poor hand!"

Later the doctor would count eleven separate stings. Now all they saw was a dotting of small holes, as if his palm and fingers had been sprinkled with grains of red paper. The swelling was bad. His hand had begun to look like one of those cartoon images where Bugs Bunny or Daffy Duck has just slammed his fist with a hammer.

"Wendy, go get that spray stuff in the bathroom," he said.

She went after it, and he sat down next to Danny and slipped a t arm around his shoulders.

"After we spray your hand, I want to take some Polaroids of it, doc. Then you sleep the rest of the night with us. Okay?"

"Sure," Danny said. "But why are you going to take pictures?"

"So maybe we can sue the ass out of some people."

Wendy came back with a spray tube in the shape of a chemical fire extinguisher.

"This won't hurt honey," she said, taking off the cap.

Danny held out his hand and she sprayed both sides until it stung. He let out a long, shuddery sigh.

"Does it smart?" she asked.

"No. Feels better."

"Now these. Crunch 'em up." She held out five orange-flavored baby aspirin. Danny took them and popped them into his mouth one by one.

"Isn't that a lot of aspirin?" Jack asked.

"It's a lot of stings," she snapped at him angrily. "You go and get rid of that nest, John. I want it. Right now."

"Just a minute."

He went to the dresser and took his Polaroid Square Shooter out of the top drawer. He cranked the keeper and it and some flashcubes.

"Jack, what are you doing?" she asked, a little nervous.

"He's gonna take some pictures of my hand. Danny's a graverobber, and they were gonna sue the ass out of some people. Right, Dad?"

"Right," Jack said grimly. He had found the flashbulb primed and he popped it on to the camera. "He's gonna sue. I figure about five thousand dollars a sting."

"What are you talking about? We're a near-v screenmel-

"I'll tell you what," he said. "I followed the three ants on that jumping bug horn. We're going to see him. The Jumping was detective. Had to have been. How else can you explain this?"

"Oh," she said in a small voice.

He took four pictures, putting out each covered print for Wendy to time on the small locket watch she wore around her neck. Danny, fascinated with the idea that his stung hand might be worth thousands and thousands of dollars, began to lose some of his fright and take an active interest. The hand throbbed dully, and he had a small headache.

When Jack had put the camera away and spread the prints out on top of the dresser to dry, Wendy said, "Should we take him to the doctor tonight?"

"Not unless he's really in pain." Jack said. "If a person has a strong allergy to wasp venom, it hits within thirty seconds."

"Hits? What do you—"

"A coma. Or convulsions."

"Oh. Oh my Jesus." She cupped her hands over her elbows and hugged herself, looking pale and wan.

"How do you feel, son? Think you could sleep?"

Danny blinked at them. The nightmare had faded to a dull, fear-arcless background in his mind, but he was still frightened.

"If I can sleep with you."

"Of course," Wendy said. "Oh honey. I'm so sorry."

"It's okay, Mommy."

She began to cry again, and Jack put his hands on her shoulders. "Wendy. I swear to you that I followed the directions."

"Will you get rid of it in the morning? Please?"

"Of course I will."

The three of them groined together, and Jack was about to snuff off the light over the bed when he noticed and pushed the covers back instead, and a picture of the nest, too.

"Come right back."

"I will."

He went to the dresser, got the camera and the as if herbe and gave Danny a closed thumb-and-finger circle. Danny smiled and gave it back with his good hand.

Quack! but he thought as he walked down to Danny's room. *All of that and then some.*

The overhead was still on. Jack crossed to the hunk setup, and as he glanced at the table beside it, his skin crawled with goose flesh. The short hairs on his neck prickled and tried to stand erect.

He could hardly see the nest through the clear Pyrex bowl. The inside of the glass was crawling with wasps. It was hard to tell how many. Fifty at least. Maybe a hundred.

His heart thudding slowly in his chest, he took his pictures and then set the camera down to wait for them to develop. He wiped his lips with the palm of his hand. One thought played over and over in his mind, echoing with

(You lost your temper. You lost your temper. You lost your temper.)

an almost superstitious dread. They had come back. He had killed the wasps but they had come back.

In his mind he heard himself screaming into his frightened, crying son's face: *Don't shutter!*

He wiped his lips again.

He went to Danny's worktable, rummaged in its drawers, and came up with a big jigsaw puzzle with a fiberboard backing. He took it over to the bedtable and carefully slid the bowl and the nest onto it. The wasps buzzed angrily inside their prison. Then, putting his hand firmly on top of the bowl so it wouldn't slip, he went out into the hall.

"Coming to bed, Jack?" Wendy asked.

"Coming to bed, Daddy?"

"Have to go out upstairs for a minute," he said, making his voice light.

How had it happened. How in God's name?

The bomb scare hadn't been a dud. He had seen the thick white smoke start to puff out of it when he had pulled the ring. And when he had gone up two floors later, he had taken a lift of small dead bodies out of the hole in the top.

Then how? Speculation. Speculation?

That was crazy. Seventeenth-century biology. Insects don't regenerate. And even if wasp eggs could mature full-grown insects in twelve hours, this wasn't the season in which the queen laid. This happened in April or May. Fall was the laying time.

A living contradiction, the wasps buzzed angrily under the bowl.

He took them downstairs and through the kitchen. In back there was a door which gave on the outside. A cold night wind blew against his nearly naked body, and his feet went numb almost instantly against the cold concrete of the platform he was standing on, the platform where milk deliveries were made during the hotel's operating season. He put the puzzle and the bowl down carefully and when he stood up he looked at the thermometer nailed outside the door. FRESH UP WITH 7 UP, the thermometer said, and the mercury stood at an even twenty-five degrees. The cold would kill them by morning. He went in and shut the door firmly. After a moment's thought he locked it, too.

He crossed the kitchen again and shut off the lights. He stood in the darkness for a moment thinking, wanting a drink. Suddenly the hotel seemed full of a thousand stealthy sounds—creakings and groans and the sly snuff of the wind under the eaves where more wasps' nests might be hanging like deadly fruit.

They had come back.

And suddenly he found that he didn't like the O-truck so well anymore, as if it wasn't wasps that had stung his son—wasps that had miraculously lived through the big bomb assault—but the hotel itself.

His last thought before going upstairs to his wife and son
(*from now on you will hold your temper. No Matter What*)
was firm and hard and sure.

As he went down the hall to them he wiped his eyes with the back of his hand.

17

THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Stripped to his underpants, lying on the examination table, Danny Torrance looked very small. He was looking up at Dr. (last call me Bul") Edmonds, who was wheeling a large black machine up beside him. Danny rolled his eyes to get a better look at it.

"Don't let it scare you, go." Bill Edmonds said. "It's an electroencephalograph, and it doesn't hurt."

"Electro—"

"We call it EEG for short. I'm going to hook a bunch of wires to your head—no, not stick them in, only tape them—and the pens on this part of the gadget will record your brain waves."

"Like on 'The Six Million Dollar Man'?"

"About the same. Would you like to be like Steve Austin when you grow up?"

"No way." Danny said as the nurse began to tape the wires to a number of tiny shaved spots on his scalp. "My daddy says that someday he'll get a short circuit and then he'll be up sh— he'll be up the creek."

"I know that creek well," Dr. Edmonds said amiably. "I've been up it a few times myself sans paddle. An EEG can tell us lots of things, Danny."

"Like what?"

"Like for instance if you have epilepsy. That's a little problem where—"

"Yeah. I know what epilepsy is."

"Really?"

"Sure. There was a kid in my nursery school back in Vermont. I went to nursery school when I was a little kid—and he had it. He wasn't supposed to use the flashlight."

"What was that, Dan?" He had turned on the machine. Thin lines began to trace their way across graph paper.

"It had all these dials, all different colors. And when you turned it on, some colors would flash but not all. And you had to count the colors and if you pushed the right button, you could turn it off. Brent couldn't use that."

"That's because bright flashing lights sometimes cause an epileptic seizure."

"You mean using the flashlight might've made Brent pitch a fit?"

Edmonds and the nurse exchanged a brief, amused glance. "Inelegant but accurately put, Danny."

"What?"

"I said you're right, except you should say 'seizure' instead of

path a few feet away from the machine, as soft as a mouse now.

"Okay."

Danny, when you have these . . . whenever the . . . do you ever recall seeing bright flashing lights before?"

"No."

"Funny noises. Ringing. Or it must be a doorbell."

"Hubbub."

"How about a funny smell, maybe like oranges or sawdust? Or a smell like something rotten?"

"No, sir."

"Sometimes do you feel like crying before you pass or after? Even though you don't feel sad?"

"No way."

"That's fine, then."

"Have I got epilepsy, Dr. Bell?"

"I don't think so, Danny. Just a seizure. Almost done."

The machine hummed and scratched for another five minutes and then Dr. Edmonds shut it off.

"All right, guy." Edmonds said briskly. "Let Sally get those electrodes off you and then come into the next room. I want to have a little talk with you. Okay?"

"Sure."

"Sally, you go ahead and give him a line just before he comes in."

"All right."

Edmonds ripped off the long curl of paper the machine had extruded and went into the next room looking at it.

"I'm going to prick your arm just a little," the nurse said after Danny had blown up his pants. "It's to make sure you don't have TB."

"They gave me that at my school just last year," Danny said without much hope.

"But that was a long time ago and you're a big boy now, right?"

"I guess so," Danny sighed, and offered his arm up for sacrifice.

When he had his shirt and shoes on, he went through the sliding door and into Dr. Edmonds's office. Edmonds was sitting on the edge of his desk, swinging his legs thoughtfully.

"Hi, Danny."

"It."

"How's the hand now?" He pointed at Danny's left hand, which was lightly bandaged.

"Pretty good."

"Good. I looked at your EEG and it seems fine. But I'm going to send it to a friend of mine in Denver who makes sense out of reading those things. I just want to make sure."

"Yes, sir."

"Tell me about Tony, Dan."

Danny shuffled his feet. "He's just an invisible friend," he said. "I made him up. To keep me company."

Edmonds laughed and put his hands on Danny's shoulders. "Now that's what your Mom and Dad say. But this is just between us, guy. I'm your doctor. Tell me the truth and I'll promise not to tell them unless you say I can."

Danny thought about it. He looked at Edmonds and then, with a small effort of concentration, he tried to catch Edmonds's thoughts or at least the color of his mood. And suddenly he got an oddly comforting image in his head. The cabinets, their doors sliding shut one after another, locking with a click. Written on the small tabs in the center of each door was A-C, SECRET, D-G, SECRET, and so on. This made Danny feel a little easier.

Cautiously he said, "I don't know who Tony is."

"Is he your age?"

"No. He's at least eleven. I think he might be even older. I've never seen him right up close. He might be old enough to drive a car."

"You just see him at a distance. Huh?"

"Yes, sir."

"And he always comes just before you pass out?"

"Well, I don't pass out. It's like I go with him. And he shows me things."

"What kind of things?"

"Well . . ." Danny debated for a moment and then told Edmonds about Daddy's trunk with all his writing in it and about how the movers hadn't lost it between Vermont and Colorado at all. It had been right under the stars all along.

"And your daddy found it where Tony said he would?"

"Oh yes, sir. Only Tony didn't tell me. He showed me."

"I wonder and Danny, what did Tony show you last night? When you closed your eyes for the bathroom?"

"I don't remember," Danny said quickly.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, sir."

"A moment ago I said you locked the bathroom door. But that wasn't right, was it? Tony locked the door."

"No, sir. Tony couldn't lock the door because he's so real. He wanted me to do it, so I did. I locked it."

"Does Tony always show you where his things are?"

"No, sir. Sometimes he shows me things that are going to happen."

"Really?"

"Sure. Like one time Tony showed me the playgrounds and was an ma park in Great Barrington. Tony said Daddy was going to take me there for my birthday. He did, sir."

"What else does he show you?"

Danny frowned. "Signs. He's always showing me stupid old signs. And I can't read them hardly ever."

"Why do you suppose Tony would do that, Danny?"

"I don't know," Danny brightened. "But my Daddy and Mommy are teaching me to read, and I'm trying real hard."

"So you can read Tony's signs."

"Well, I really want to learn. But that, too, yeah."

"Do you like Tony, Danny?"

Danny looked at the tile floor and said nothing.

"Danny?"

"It's hard to tell," Danny said. "I used to. I used to hope he'd come every day, because he always showed me good things, especially since Mommy and Daddy don't think about my voice anymore." Dr. Edmund's gaze sharpened, but Danny then noticed. He was looking hard at the floor, concentrating on expressing himself. But now whenever he comes he shows me bad things. Awful things. Like in the bathroom last night. The things he shows me, they sting me like those wasps stung me. Only Tony's things sting me up here." He cocked a finger gravely at his temple, a small boy unconsciously barlequing suicide.

"What things, Danny?"

"I can't remember!" Danny cried out, agonized. "I'd tell you if

"I could! It's like I can't remember because it's so bad I don't want to remember. And I can remember what I wake up is RED RUM." "

"Red *dram* or red *rum*?"

"Rum."

"What's that, Danny?"

"I don't know."

"Danny?"

"Yes, sir?"

"Can you make Tony come now?"

"I don't know. He doesn't always come. I don't ever know if I want him to come anymore."

"Try, Danny. I'll be right here."

Danny looked at Edmonds doubtfully. Edmonds nodded encouragement.

Danny let out a long sighing breath and nodded. "But I don't know if it will work. I never did it with anyone looking at me before. And Tony doesn't always come, anyway."

"If he doesn't, he doesn't," Edmonds said. "I just want you to try."

"Okay."

He dropped his gaze to Edmonds's slowly swinging safters and cast his mind outward toward his mommy and daddy. They were here somewhere—right beyond that wall with the picture on it—as a matter of fact. In the living room where they had come on Spring side by side but not talking. Lolling through magazines. Worried. About him.

He concentrated harder, his brow furrowed, trying to get rid of the feeling of his mommy's thoughts. "I was always harder when they weren't right there in the room with him. Then he began to get it. Mommy was thinking about a sister. Her sister. The sister was dead. His mommy was thinking that was the main thing that turned her mommy into such a

(bitch?)

into such an old lady. Because her sister had died. As a little girl she was

but by a car oh god, I could never stand anything like that again like a teen but what if he's sick really sick cancer spinal meningitis leukemia brain tumor like John Guther's son or muscular dystrophy oh jeez kuts his age get leukemia or the one that's from

men's clothes that we could afford on the like but the course they must cost you out to do on the same and anyway he's a right a right a right you're by should not yourself think)

(Danny—)

(about fifteen and)

(Dannee—)

that car)

(Dannee—)

But Tony was there. Only his voice. And as it faded Danny followed it down into darkness, falling and tumbling down some magic hole between Dr. B's swinging loafers, past a loud knocking sound, farther, a bath tub cruised silently by in the darkness with some horrible thing lolling in it, past a sound like sweetly chiming church bells, past a clock under a dome of glass.

Then the dark was pierced feebly by a single light festooned with cobwebs. The weak glow disclosed a stone floor that looked damp and unpleasant. Somewhere not far distant was a steady mechanical roaring sound, but mured, not frightening. Superficial. It was the thing that would be forgotten, Danny thought with dreamy surprise.

As his eyes adjusted to the gloom he could see Tony just ahead of him, a silhouette. Tony was looking at something and Danny strained his eyes to see what it was.

(Your daddy. See your daddy?)

Of course he did. How could he have missed him, even in the basement light's feeble glow? Daddy was kneeling on the floor, casting the beam of a flashlight over old cardboard boxes and wooden crates. The cardboard boxes were mushy and old, some of them had sprung open and spilled drifts of paper onto the floor. Newspapers, books, printed pieces of paper that looked like his. His daddy was examining them with great interest. And then Daddy looked up and shone his flashlight in another direction. His beam of light unspooled another book, a large white one bound with gold string. The cover looked like white leather. It was a scrapbook. Danny suddenly needed to cry out to his daddy, to tell him to leave that book alone, that some books should not be opened. But his daddy was climbing toward it.

The mechanical roaring sound, which he now recognized as the

however the Overlook which Daddy checked three or four times every day, had developed an ominous, rhythmic habit. It began to sound like . . . like pounding. And the smell of mud and wet, rotting paper was changing to something else—the high-jannery smell of the Bad Stuff. It hung around his daddy like a vapor as he reached for the book . . . and grasped it.

Tony was somewhere in the darkness.

(This inhuman place makes human monsters. This inhuman place,

*repeating the same incomprehensible thing over and over
(makes human monsters.)*

Fading through darkness again, now accompanied by the heavy-pounding thunder that was no longer the boiler but the sound of a whistling mallet striking a steel-painted wall, knocking out whiffs of plaster dust. Crouching helplessly on the blue-black woven-tape rug.

(Come out)

(This inhuman place)

(and take your medicine!)

(makes human monsters.)

With a gasp that echoed in his ears, he jerked himself out of the darkness. Hands were on him and at first he shrank back, hinking that the dark thing in the Overlook of Tony's world had somehow followed him back into the world of real things—and then Dr. Edmonds was saying: "You're all right, Danny. You're all right. Everything is fine."

Danny recognized the doctor, then his surroundings in the office. He began to shudder helplessly. Edmonds held him.

When the reaction began to subside, Edmonds asked: "You said something about monsters, Danny—what was it?"

"This inhuman place," he said gradually. "Tony told me this inhuman place . . . makes . . . makes . . ." He shook his head. "Can't remember."

"Try!"

"I can't."

"Did Tony come?"

"Yes."

"What did he show you?"

"Dark. Pounding. I don't remember."

"Where were you?"

Leave me alone. I don't remember. Leave me alone! He began to sob helplessly in fear and frustration. It was as if he were covered in a sticky mess like a wet bundle of paper, his memory unreadable.

Edmonds went to the water cooler and got him a paper cup of water. Danny drank. Later Edmonds got him another one.

"Better?"

"Yes."

Danny. "I don't want to badger you. Please you about this. I want. But can you remember anything about *before* I was born?"

"My mommy," Danny said slowly. "She's worried about me."

"Mothers always are, guy."

"No," she had a sister that died when she was a little girl. Aileen. She was thinking about how Aileen got hit by a car and that made her worried about me. I don't remember anything else."

Edmonds was looking at him sharply. "Just now she was thinking that. Out of the waiting room?"

"Yes, sir."

Danny, how would you know this?"

"I don't know," Danny said warily. "The singing, I guess."

"The what?"

Danny shook his head very slowly. "I'm awful tired. Can't I go see my mommy and daddy? I don't want to answer any more questions. I'm tired. And my stomach hurts."

"Are you going to throw up?"

"No, sir. I just want to go see my mommy and daddy."

"Okay, Dan," Edmonds stood up. "You go on out and see them for a minute. Then send them in so I can talk to them. Okay?"

"Yes, sir."

"There are books out there to look at. You like books, don't you?"

"Yes, sir," Danny said dutifully.

"You're a good boy, Danny."

Danny gave him a faint smile.

* * *

"I can't find anything wrong with him," Dr. Edmonds said to the Torrances. "Not physically. Mentally, he's bright and rather too imaginative. It happens. Children have to grow into their imagina-

mons like a pair of oversized shoes. Danny's size is way too big for him, ever had his IQ tested?"

"I don't believe in them," Jack said. "They straight-jacket the expectations of both parents and teachers."

Dr. Edmonds nodded. "That may be. But if you did test him, I think you'd find he's right off the scale for his age group. His verbal ability, for a boy who is five going on six, is amazing."

"We don't talk down to him," Jack said with a trace of pride.

"I doubt if you've ever had to in order to make yourself understood," Edmonds paused, frowning with a pen. He went into a trance while I was with him. At my request. Exactly as you described him in the ha ha room last night. All his muscles went lax, his body slumped, his eyeballs reared outward. Textbook autohypnosis. I was amazed. I said am."

The Terrances sat forward. "What happened?" Wendy asked. "Cause you and Edmonds carefully relaxed Danny's trance," he muttered phrase from which Edmonds had only been able to pluck the word "monsters." "The dark," the prounding. The aftermath of ears near hysteria and nervous stomach.

"Tony again," Jack said.

"What does it mean?" Wendy asked. "Have you any idea?"

"A few. You might not like them."

"Go ahead anyway," Jack told him.

From what Danny told me, his invisible friend was truly a friend until you took him out here from New England. Tony has only become a threatening figure since that move. The pleasant interludes have become nightmarish, even more frightening to your son because he can't remember exactly what the nightmares are about. That's common enough. We all remember our pleasant dreams more clearly than the scary ones. There seems to be a buffer somewhere between the conscious and the subconscious, and one side of a business lives in there. This person only goes through a screen, and often what does come through is only symbolic. That's over my life. Freud said it does not very much describe what we know of the mind's mechanism, we said."

"You think moving has upset Danny that badly?" Wendy asked.

"It may have, if the move took place under traumatic circumstances," Edmonds said. "Did it?"

Wendy and Jack exchanged a glance.

"I was coming to a prep school," Jack said slowly. "I lost my job."

"I see," Edmunds said. He put the pen he had been playing with firmly back in its holder. "There's more here, I'm afraid. It may be painful to you. Your son seems to believe you two have seriously contemplated divorce. He spoke of it in an offhand way, but only because he believes you are no longer considering it."

Jack's mouth dropped open, and Wendy recoiled as if slapped. The blood drained from her face.

"We never even discussed it," she said. "Not in front of him, not even in front of each other! We—"

"I think it's best if you understand everything, Doctor," Jack said. "Shortly after Donny was born, I became an alcoholic. I had a drinking problem all the way through college. It subsided a little after Wendy and I met, dropped up worse than ever after Danny was born, and the writing I consider to be my real work was going badly. When Danny was three and a half, he spilled some beer on a bunch of papers I was working on. Papers I was scribbling around, anyway. And I was wet. I was so drunk. His voice broke, but his eyes remained dry and well nothing. 'I seem to goddamn hear you say you love me,' he broke his arm, crying him around to spank him. Three months later I gave up drinking. I haven't touched it since."

"I see," Edmunds said neutrally. "I know the arm had been broken. Of course I was set well." He pushed back from his desk a little and crossed his legs. "I may be frank, son, but you say that he's been in one way abused. Well, then. Other than his stings, there's nothing in him but the normal helplessness of his kind. Any kid has in abundance."

"Of course not," Wendy said hotly. "Jack didn't mean—"

"No, Wendy," Jack said. "I meant to do it. I guess something was so I got to do it, and I was that to him. On something even worse. He looked back at Edmunds again. "You know something, Doctor? This is the first time he's ever said 'I've been' mentioned or 'seen' as a child, even in a such a hearing. Three firsts in five minutes."

"That may be a reflection of the problem," Edmunds said. "I am not a psychiatrist. If you want Donny to see a psychiatrist, I

can recommend a good one who works out of the Mission Ridge Medical Center in Boulder. But I am fairly confident of my diagnosis. Danny is an intelligent, imaginative, perceptive boy. I don't believe he would have been as upset by your marital problems as you believed. Small children are great accepters. They don't understand shame, or the need to hide things.

Jack was studying his hands. Wendy took one of them and squeezed it.

"But he sensed the things that were wrong. Chief among them from his point of view was not the broken arm but the broken—or breaking—link between you two. He mentioned divorce to me about the broken arm. When my nurse mentored, he said to her, 'he simply shrugged it off. It was no pressure thing. I happened a long time ago, is what I think he said.'"

"That kid?" Jack muttered. His jaws were clamped together, the muscles in the cheeks standing out. "We don't deserve him."

"You have him all the same," Edmonds said dryly. "At any rate, he retreats into a fantasy world from time to time. Nothing unusual about that. Lots of kids do. As I recall, I had my own invisible friend when I was Danny's age, a talking rooster named Chug-Chug. Of course no one could see Chug-Chug but me. I had two older brothers who often left me behind, and, in such a situation Chug-Chug came in mighty handy. And, of course you will understand why Danny's invisible friend is named Tony instead of Mike or Hal or Dutch."

"Yes," Wendy said.

"Have you ever pointed it out to him?"

"No," Jack said. "Should we?"

"Why bother? Let him realize it in his own time, by his own logic. You see, Danny's fantasies were considerably deeper than those that grow around the ordinary invisible friend syndrome, but he felt he needed Tony that much more. Tony would come and show him pleasant things. Some very amazing things. Always good things. Once Tony showed him where Danny's fist in it was—under the stars. Another time Tony showed him that Mommy and Daddy were going to take him to an amusement park for his birthday—"

"At Great Barrington?" Wendy cried. "But how could he know

those things? It's eerie, the things he comes out with sometimes. Almost as if . . ."

"He had second sight?" Edmonds asked, smiling.

"He was born with a call," Wendy said weakly.

Edmonds's smile became a good, hearty laugh. Jack and Wendy exchanged a glance and then also smiled, both of them amazed at how easy it was. Danny's occasional "lucky guesses" about things was something else they had not discussed much.

"Next you'll be telling me he can levitate," Edmonds said, still smiling. "No, no, no, I'm afraid not. It's not extrasensory but good old human perception, which in Danny's case is unusually keen. Mr. Torrance, he knew your trunk was under the stairs because you had looked everywhere else. Process of elimination, what? It's so simple. Every Queen would laugh at it. Somner or later you would have thought of it yourself."

"As for the amusement park at Great Barrington, whose place was that originally? Yours or his?"

His, of course. Wendy said. "They advertised on all the morning children's programs. He was wild to go. But the thing is, Doctor, we couldn't afford to take him. And we had told him so."

"Then a men's magazine I'd send a story to back in 1971 sent a check for fifty dollars. Jack said, 'They were reprinting the story in an annual or something. So we decided to spend it on Danny.'"

Edmonds shrugged. "Wish fulfillment plus a little coincidence."

"Confession: I bet he's a stight," Jack said.

Edmonds smiled a little. "And Danny himself told me that. They often showed him things that never occurred. Very much as in my fairly perceptive, that is to say, Danny's, dreamings he appears to do what these so-called mediums and mind readers do quite consciously and intentionally. I admire him for it. If he doesn't use his gift to enrich his notoriety, I think he's the greatest man."

Wendy nodded. "Of course she thinks. Danny can't be quite a man, but he does it's experience struck her as a bit of a not a mere like magazine, but a man. Edmonds had not said with him. He had not been there when Danny found lost buttons, or her hat may be he. If C. was under the bed, the he thought he had it. Wendy's smile was a memory so had even to go the sun

was out — and later that day they had walked home under her umbrella through the pouring rain. Edmonds couldn't know of the curious way Danny had of preguessing them both. She would decide to have an unusual evening cup of tea, go out in the kitchen and find her cup out with a tea bag in it. She would remember that the books were due at the library and find them all neatly piled up on the hall table, her library card on top. Or Jack would take it into his head to wax the Volkswagen and find Danny already out there, listening to tinny top-forty music on his crystal radio as he sat on the curb to watch

Aloud she said. Then why the nightmares now? Why did Tony tell him to lock the bathroom door?"

"I believe it's because Tony has realized his usefulness," Edmonds said. "He was born. Tony not Danny, at a time when you and your husband were struggling to keep your mortgage together. Your husband was drinking too much. There was the accident of the broken arm. The ominous quiet he sees you

Ominous quiet, yes, that phrase was the real thing, anyway. The stiff silence means where the only conversation had been please pass the butter or Danny eat the rest of your carrots or may I be excused please. The nights when Jack was gone and she lay and down, dry-eyed, on the couch while Danny watched TV. The mornings when she and Jack had streaked around each other like two angry cats with a quivering, frightened mouse between them. It all rang true,

dear God, did our secret ever stop hurting?"

horribly, horribly true

Edmonds resumed. "But things have changed. You know schizoid behavior is a pretty common thing in children. It's accepted, because all we parents have this unspoken agreement that children are fantasies. They have imaginary friends. They may be and sit in the corner when they're depressed, or crawling from the window. They do not claim any importance or responsibility. A teddy bear or a stuffed tiger. I see some children who, when the adult sees things that aren't there, we consider them ready for the rubber room. When a child says he's seen a troll in his bed, or a vampire crawling in the window, we simply smile and say, 'We

give a one sentence explanation that explains the whole range of such phenomena in children—"

"He'll grow out of it," Jack said.

Edmonds blinked. "My very words," he said. "Yes. Now I would guess that Danny was in a pretty good position to develop a full-fledged psychosis. Unhappy home life, a big imagination, the mischievous friend who was so real to him that he nearly became real to you. Instead of growing out of his childhood schizophrenia, he might well have grown into it."

"And become artistic?" Wendy asked. She had read about autism. The word itself frightened her, it sounded like dread and white silence.

"Possible but not necessarily. He might simply have entered Tony's world someday and never come back to what he calls 'real things.'"

"God," Jack said.

"But now the basic situation has changed drastically. Mr. Torrance no longer drinks. You are in a new place where conditions have forced the three of you into a tighter family unit than ever before—certainly tighter than my own, where my wife and kids may see me for only two or three hours a day. To my mind he is in the perfect bearing situation. And I think the very fact that he is able to differentiate so sharply between Tony's world and 'real things' says a lot about the fundamentally healthy state of his mind. He says that you two are no longer considering divorce. Is he as right as I think he is?"

"Yes," Wendy said, and Jack squeezed her hand tightly, almost painfully. She squeezed back.

Edmonds nodded. "He really doesn't need Tony anymore. Danny is flushing him out of his system. Tony no longer brings pleasant visions but horrible nightmares that are too frightening for him to remember except fragmentarily. He internalized Tony carrying a affliction—desperate. He's stuck in it, and Tony's not leaving easily. But he is leaving. Your son is a little like a junkie kicking the habit."

He stood up, and the Torrances stood also.

"As I said, I'm not a psychiatrist. If the nightmares are still coming when your job at the Overlook ends next spring, Mr. Tor-

rance I would strongly urge you to take him to his man in Bowder."

"I will."

"Well, let's go out and tell him he can go home," Edmonds said.

I want to thank you," Jack told him carefully. "I feel better about all this than I have in a very long time."

"So do I," Wendy said.

As he did so, Edmonds paused and looked at Wendy. "Do you mind if you have a sister, Mrs. Torrance? Named Alice?"

Wendy looked at him, surprised. "Yes, I did. She was killed outside our home in Somersworth, New Hampshire, when she was six and I was ten. She closed a ball in the street and was struck by a delivery van."

"Does Danny know that?"

"I don't know. I don't think so."

"He says you were thinking about her in the waiting room."

I was," Wendy said slowly. "For the first time in . . . oh, I don't know how long."

Does he want to learn more about her?"

Wendy shook her head, but Jack said, "He mentioned that when he first got here, before he went to sleep. Red dress."

No, *rum*," Edmonds corrected. "He was quite emphatic about that. *Rum*. As in the drink. The one he likes to drink."

"Oh," Jack said. "It is in, doesn't it?" He took his cap from his back pocket and wiped his eyes with it.

Does he phrase the shining mean anything to you?"

It's my hobby, he should be a dealer.

Doesn't matter, I guess, Edmonds said. He opened the door to the waiting room. "Any way, see to it that Danny Torrance that would like to go home?"

Hi, Dad," I, Mommy. He stood up from the mat where he had been lying, saw the girl and spoke to her. "Come with me. I know the and make a good job of it. It is a good job."

He said to Jack, who nodded from his Wendy's place, "Is that all?"

Edmonds peered at him. "I see you are here. I see you are here. You can stay with your dad."

No, sir. Danny says he wants to go home. He's going home with me."

Jack's neck, one arm around Wendy's, and looked radiantly happy.

"Okay," Edmonds said, smiling. He looked at Wendy. "You call if you have any problems."

"Yes."

"I don't want you w L," Edmonds said, smiling.

18

THE SCRAPBOOK

Jack found the scrapbook on the first of November while his wife and son were fixing up the rutted old road that ran from behind the rogue court to a deserted sawmill two miles farther up. The fine weather still held, and all three of them had acquired improbable autumn surtans.

He had gone down in the basement to knock the press down on the boiler and then, on impulse, he had taken the flashlight from the shelf where the plumbing schematics were and decided to look at some of the old papers. He was also looking for good places to set his traps, although he didn't plan to do that for another month.

I want them all to be home from vacation, he had told Wendy.

Shining the flashlight ahead of him, he stepped past the elevator shaft (at Wendy's insistence they hadn't used the elevator since they moved in) and through the small stone arch. His nose worked in the smell of rotting paper. Behind him the boiler kicked on with a thundering *whooosh* making him jump.

He flickered the light around, whistling tunelessly between his teeth. There was a scale-model Andes range down here, dozens of boxes and crates stuffed with papers, most of them white and shapeless with age and damp. Others had broken open and spilled yellowed shavings of paper onto the stone floor. There were bags of newspaper tied up with hayrope. Some boxes contained what looked like baggers, and others contained invoices bound with rubber bands. Jack pulled one out and put the flashlight beam on it.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN EXPRESS INC

To: OVERLOOK HOTEL

From: SIDNEY'S WAREHOUSE 1710 6th Street Denver CO

Via: CANADIAN PACIFIC RR

Contents: 400 CASES OF LILEY TOILET TISSUE,

1 GROSS/CASE

Signed D E F

Date August 24, 1954

Smiling, Jack let the paper drop back into his box.

He flashed the light above him and inspected a hanging lightbulb, a most buried in cobwebs. There was no chain pull.

He stood on Lptne and tried screwing the bulb in. It was weakly. He picked up the toilet-paper invoice again and used it to wipe off some of cobwebs. The glow didn't brighten much.

Still using the flashlight, he wandered through the boxes and boxes of paper, looking for rat spoor. They had been here, but not for quite a long time—maybe years. He found some droppings that were powdery with age and several nests of neatly shredded paper that were old and unused.

Jack pulled a newspaper from one of the bundles and glanced down at the headline.

JOHNSON PROMISES ORDERLY TRANSITION

Says Work Begins by JFK Will Go Forward in Coming Year

The paper was the *Rocky Mountain News*, dated December 19, 1963. He dropped it back onto its pile.

He supposed he was fascinated by that commonplace sense of history that anyone can feel glancing through the fresh news of ten or twenty years ago. He found gaps in the piled newspapers and records, nothing from 1937 to 1945, from 1957 to 1960, from 1962 to 1963. Periods when the hotel had been closed, he guessed. When it had been between suckers grabbing for the brass ring.

Linman's explanations of the Overlook's checkered career still didn't ring quite true to him. It seemed that the Overlook's spectacular location alone should have guaranteed its continuing success. There had always been an American jet set, even before jets were invented, and it seemed to Jack that the Overlook should have been one of the bases they touched in their migrations. It

The money must have been paid with his credit card. The money must have been spectacularly bad

There was just this one thing that you noticed in newspaper headlines. It was a feud between the editors in the editorial and account books and computer. This was where you could find your secret. In 1977 Warren G. Harding had married a woman who was a woman. He was a woman and a case of Coors beer. But when had he been eating and drinking with? Had he been a poker game? A strategy session? What?

Jack glanced at his watch and was surprised to see that only fifteen minutes had somehow slipped by since he had come down here. His hands and arms were gray and he probably smelled bad. He decided to go up and take a shower before Wendy and Danny got back.

He walked slowly between the mountains of paper. He moved ahead and ticking over possible in a speedy way. He was expecting. He hadn't felt this way in years. It suddenly seemed that he knew he had seriously promised himself might really happen. It might even be right here, buried in these endless heaps of paper. It could be a work of fiction or history or both. A long book expanding out of this central place in a hundred directions.

He slid beneath the cobwebby light, took his handkerchief from his back pocket without thinking and scrubbed at his lips with it. And that was when he saw the scrapbook.

A pile of five boxes stood on his left like some forlorn Pisa. The one on top was stuffed with mementoes and odders. Balanced on top of those, keeping its angle of repose for who knew how many years, was a thick scrapbook with white leather covers, its pages bound with two banks of gold string that had been led along the binding in gaudy bows.

Curious, he went over and took it down. The top cover was muck with dust. He held it on a pane at hip level, blew the dust off

the door and opened it. As he did so a card floated out and he grabbed it in mid-air before it could fall to the floor. It was thick and creamy, dominated by a raised engraving of the Overlook with every window alight. The lawn and playground were decorated with glowing Japanese lanterns. It looked almost as though you could step right into it, an Overlook Hotel that had existed thirty years ago.

*Horace M. Derwent Requests
The Pleasure of Your Company
At a Masked Ball to Celebrate
The Grand Opening of*

THE OVERLOOK HOTEL

*Dinner Will Be Served At 8 P.M.
Unmasking And Dancing At Midnight
August 29, 1945* RSVP

Dinner at eight! Unmasking at midnight!

He could almost see them in the dining room, the richest men in America and their women. Tuxedos and gammying scarves, shirts, evening gowns, the band playing gleaming high-heeled pumps. The clinking glasses, the joyful pop of champagne corks. The war was over, or almost over. The future lay ahead, clean and shining. America was the colossus of the world and at last she knew it and accepted it.

And later, at midnight, Derwent himself crying, "Unmask! Unmask! The masks coming off and . . .

The Red Death held sway over all.

He frowned. What left field "what" had come out of that? That was Poe, the Great American Hack. And surely the Overlook, this shining gleaming Overlook in the mountains he held in his hands, was the farthest cry from E. A. Poe imaginable.

He put the invitation back and turned to the next page. A paste-up from one of the Denver papers, and scratched beneath it the date, May 15, 1947.

POSH MOUNTAIN RESORT REOPENS WITH STELLAR GUEST REGISTER

Derwent Says Overlook Will Be "Showplace of the World"

By David Felton, Features Editor

The Overlook Hotel has been opened and reopened in its

...my old car but a very fine one with a built-in garage and it is as fast as promised by Horace Derwent. The mechanic who brought it to me is a fellow who is the oldest owner of his business.

Derwent, who makes no secret of having sunk more money in this new venture than in his newest venture, and some say he figures it over. He never says that. The new Overlook will be one of the world's showplaces, he kind of tells you when he is very high in thirty years' time."

When Derwent, who is rumored to have substantial Las Vegas holdings, was asked of his purchase and sale of the Overlook, he opened up in a back-lash. He said he was not into gambling in Colorado. The article was printed in the morning and shipping magazine carried it with a note. The Overlook would be cleaned by gambling, he said. "I don't look for knocking Vegas. They've put in many of the markers but there for me to do that. I have no interest in gambling for myself or gambling in Colorado. It would be putting into the wind."

When the Overlook opens, it will be the most successful party here some time ago when the actual work was finished. The newly painted, paneled and decorated rooms will be occupied by a large number of people ranging from Chicago to the farthest shore.

Smiling bemusedly, Jack turned the page. Now he was looking at a full page advertisement for the New York Sunday Times. On the page after that, a story on Derwent himself, a balding man with eyes that pierced you even from an old newspaper print. He was wearing rimless spectacles and a first-class pocket watch. The face was that of an accountant. It was the eyes that made him look like someone or something else.

Jack skimmed the article rapidly. He knew most of the information from a New York story on Derwent the year before. Born prior to St. Paul, never finished high school, joined the Navy, married Rose rapidly, then left in a bitter wrangle over his patent on a new type of propeller that he had designed. In the end of war, he was between the Navy and an unknown young man named Horace Derwent. Uncle Sam came off the predictable winner. But Uncle Sam had never gotten over her patent, and there had been a lot of them.

In the late twenties and early thirties, Derwent, once a avid

He bought out a bankrupt crop-storing company, turned it into an aerial service, and prospered. More patents followed: a new monoplane wing design, a birth carriage used in the Flying Fortress that had rained fire on Hamburg and Dresden and Berlin, a machine gun that was cooled by alcohol, a prototype of the ejection seat later used in United States jets.

And along the line the accountant who lived in the same skin as the inventor kept piling up the investments. A piling string of munitions factories in New York and New Jersey. Five textile mills in New England. Chemical factories in the bankrupt and grinding South. At the end of the Depression his wealth had been nothing but a handful of controlling interests, bought at abysmally low prices, saleable only at lower prices still. At one point Derwent boasted that he could liquidate completely and realize the price of a three-year-old Chevrolet.

There had been rumors. Jack recalled that some of the men employed by Derwent to keep his head above water were less than savory. Involvement with bootlegging. Prostitution in the Midwest. Smuggling in the coastal areas of the South where his fertilizer factories were finally an association with the nascent western gambling interests.

Probably Derwent's most famous investment was the purchase of the floundering Top Mark Studios, which had not had a hit since the child star Little Margery Morris had died of a heroin overdose in 1934. She was fourteen. Little Margery, who had specialized in sweet seven-year-olds who saved marriages and the lives of dogs and cats accused of killing chickens, had been given the biggest Hollywood literary biography by Top Mark. The official story was that Little Margery had contracted a "wasting disease" while entertaining a "New York couple" and some critics suggested the studio had had out a little long green because it knew it was buying itself.

Derwent hired a keen business man and former ex-mannequin named Henry Finkel to run Top Mark, and in the two years before Pearl Harbor the studio ground out sixty movies, five of which glided right in to the face of the Hayes Office and spit out a large blue nose. The other five were government training films. The feature films were huge successes. During one of them an unnamed costume designer had turquoise, a strapless bra for the heroine to appear in during the Grand Ball scene where she

rest and everything except possibly the birdmark just below the left of her neck. Derwent received credit for this revelation as well as his reputation for notoriety grew.

The war had made him rich and he was still rich. Living in Chicago, seldom seen except for Derwent Enterprises board meetings (which he ran with an iron hand), it was rumored that he owned United Air Lines, Las Vegas (where he was known to have controlling interests in four hotel-casinos and some involvement in at least six others), Los Angeles, and the U.S.A. itself. Rumored to be a friend of royalty, presidents, and underworld kingpins, it was supposed by many that he was the richest man in the world.

But he had not been able to make a go of the Overlook, Jack thought. He put the scraphook down for a moment and took the scraphook, check and mechanical pencil he always kept with him out of his breast pocket. He jotted "Look into H. Derwent's Swindler boy." He put the notepad back and picked up the scraphook again. His face was preoccupied, his eyes distant. He wiped his mouth constantly with his hand as he turned the pages.

He skimmed the material that followed, making a mental note to read it more closely later. Press releases were pasted into many of the pages. So-and-so was expected at the Overlook next week. This-and-that would be entertaining in the lounge (in Derwent's time it had been the Red Eye Lounge). Many of the entertainers were Vegas names, and many of the guests were Top Mark executives and stars.

Then, in a clipping marked February 1, 1952

MILLIONAIRE ENAC TO SELL COLORADO INVESTMENTS

Deal Made with California Investors in Overlook Other Investments, Derwent Reveals

By Rodney Conkitt, Financial Editor

In a case common que yesterday from the Chicago offices of the monolithic Derwent Enterprises, it was revealed that millionaire (perhaps billionaire) Horace Derwent has sold out of Colorado in a stunning financial power play that will be completed by October 1, 1954. Derwent's investments include natural gas, coal, hydroelectric power, and a land development company called Colorado Sunshine Inc., which owns or holds options on better than 500,000 acres of Colorado land.

The most famous Derwent holding in Colorado, the Over-

the Overlook has already been visited. Don't get me mixed in a roomer new yesterday. The hotel was a Communist party headquarters headed by the ex-Governor, a former director of the California Land Development Corporation, whose file was released with surprise to media sources.

He had sold out everything but stock and bonds. I was in the Overlook. But somehow, somehow.

He put his lips with his hand and waited he had a drink. This was a good one with a drink. He turned more pages.

The California group had opened the hotel for two seasons, and then sold it to a Colorado group called Mountain View. Keser, Mountain View was his name. In 1957 amid charges of corruption, neglect, a hearing, and charging the stockholders. The president of the company shot himself two days after being subpoenaed to appear before a grand jury.

The hotel had been closed for the rest of the decade. There was a strange story about a Sunday feature he'd found FOR A FEW DAYS. IN THE SINKING INTO DEATH. The accompanying photo was of a Jack's heart, the portrait of the front porch peering, the lawn a hard and scabrous mess, windows broken by storms and storms. This would be a part of the book, a book he was writing about the place, a going of water to the ashes to be reborn. He promised himself he would take care of the place, very good care. It seemed that before today he had never really understood the breadth of his responsibility to the Overlook. It was almost like having a responsibility to history.

In 1961 four writers, two of them Pulitzer Prize winners, had leased the Overlook and reopened it as a writers' school. That had lasted one year. One of the students had gotten drunk on his first floor room, crashed out of the window somehow, and fell to his death on the cement terrace below. The paper had said that the papers had been outside.

Any big hotels have got standards. Wasn't he a little bit of a writer? The hotel has got a ghost story? That paper came and go.

Suddenly it seemed that he could almost feel the weight of the Overlook bearing down on him from above: the hundred and ten guest rooms, the storage rooms, kitchen, pantry, freezer, lounge, bathroom, dining room . . .

In the room the women come and go

and the Red Death took away more than

He rubbed his lips and turned to the next page of the scrapbook. He was on the last third of 1960, and for the first time he wondered consciously whose book this was, left atop the highest pile of records in the cellar.

A new headline, this one dated April 10, 1963:

LAS VEGAS CROLP BUYS FAMOUS COLORADO HOTEL Scenic Overlook to Become Key Club

Robert T. Lelling, spokesman for a group of investors going under the name of High Country Investments, announced today in Las Vegas that High Country has negotiated a deal for the famous Overlook Hotel, a resort located high in the Rockies. Lelling declined to mention the names of specific investors, but said the hotel would be turned into an exclusive "key club." He said that the group he represents hopes to sell memberships to high-schelon executives in American and foreign companies.

High Country also owns hotels in Montana, Wyoming and Utah.

The Overlook became world-known in the years 1946 to 1952 when it was owned by elusive mega-millionaire Horace Derwent, who...

The item on the next page was a mere squib, dated four months later. The Overlook had opened under its new management. Apparently the paper hadn't been able to find out, or wasn't interested in who the key holders were, because no name was mentioned but High Country Investments, the most anonymous-sounding company name Jack had ever heard except for a chain of bike and appliance shops in western New England that went under the name of Business Inc.

He turned the page and blinked down at the clipping pasted there.

MILLIONAIRE DERWENT BACK IN COLORADO VIA BACK DOOR?

High Country Exec Revealed to be Charles Grouman

By Rodney Conkern, Financial Editor

The Overlook Hotel, a scenic pleasure palace in the Colorado high country and once the private plaything of millionaire Horace Derwent, is at the center of a financial tangle which is only now beginning to come to light.

On April 10 of last year the hotel was purchased by a Las Vegas firm, High Country Investments, as a key club for wealthy executives of both foreign and domestic breeds. Now informed sources say that High Country is headed by Charles Grand, 53, who was the head of California Land Development Corp. until 1959, when he resigned to take the position of executive veep in the Chicago home office of Derwent Enterprises.

This has led to speculation that High Country Investments may be controlled by Derwent, who may have acquired the Overlook for the second time, and under decidedly peculiar circumstances.

Grand, who was indicted and acquitted on charges of tax evasion in 1960, could not be reached for comment, and Horace Derwent, who guards his own privacy jealously, had no comment when reached by telephone. State Representative Dick Bows of Golden has called for a complete investigation into . . .

That clipping was dated July 27, 1964. The next was a column from a Sunday paper that September. The byline belonged to Josh Brannigar, a muck-taking investigator of the Jack Anderson breed. Jack vaguely recalled that Brannigar had died in 1968 or '69.

MAFIA FREE ZONE IN COLORADO?

By Josh Brannigar

It now seems possible that the newest hot spot of Organization over-roads in the U. S. is located at an out-of-the-way hotel nestled in the center of the Rockies. The Overlook Hotel, a white elephant that has been run tacky by a most a dozen different groups and individuals since it first opened its doors in 1900, is now being operated as a security-packeted key club exclusively for gambling businessmen. The question is, what business are the Overlook's key holders rear- in?

The members present during the week of August 16-23 may give us an idea. The list below was obtained by a former employee of High Country Investments, a company first believed to be a dummy company owned by Derwent Enterprises. It now seems more likely that Derwent's interest in High Country (if any) is outweighed by those of several Las Vegas gambling barons. And these same gambling henchmen have been linked in the past to both suspected and convicted underworld kingpins.

Present at the Oberlink during that very week in August were

Charles Green, President of High Country Investments. When it became known in July of this year that he was running the High Country ship it was announced considerably after the fact that he had resigned his position in Derwent Enterprises previously. The silver-haired Green, who refused to talk to me for this column, has been tried once and acquitted on tax evasion charges in 1961.

Charles Baby Charles Butsky, a 46-year-old Vegas entrepreneur, long interested in the Greenback and The Lucky Bones of the Stars. Butsky is a close personal friend of the mob. His arrest record stretches back to 1937 when he was tried and acquitted in the game and street murder of Jack Dutchy Morgan. For a while there is suspect his involvement in the drug traffic prosecution and murder of Hiro but Baby Charles has not been behind bars because of income tax evasion in 1953-56.

Richard Searns, the principal stockholder of Fun Time Amusement Machines. Fun Time makes slot machines for the Nevada crowd, pinball machines and slot games. Meade Connell for the rest of the country. He has done time for association with a deadly weapon for 14 years, a kidnapping without ransom and a robbery with murder conviction.

Phil Zuss, a Miami-based expert now residing in Las Vegas. For the last five years Zuss has been fast-tracked in as an undesirable person. He has been convicted in charges of receiving and concealing stolen property for \$50,000 and conspiracy to commit at least \$250,000 of fraud and kidnapping and murder. Phil Zuss's wife, Philippa, has been convicted and has been on probation and a suspended sentence for Atlantic City. Her husband Searns is in the company. He is a known mob associate in Las Vegas.

Tommy Green, also known as Vincent Chapin. A two-time Nevada gambler, once convicted for a murder of a fellow Nevada resident Frank Scott. Green has spent the last four or three years in the Nevada State Prison for a murder conviction. He has been out of the prison for a year but has been a prisoner in the Nevada State Prison for a year and a half. He has been a prisoner in the Nevada State Prison for a year and a half. He has been a prisoner in the Nevada State Prison for a year and a half.

Tommy Green, also known as Vincent Chapin. A two-time Nevada gambler, once convicted for a murder of a fellow Nevada resident Frank Scott. Green has spent the last four or three years in the Nevada State Prison for a murder conviction. He has been out of the prison for a year but has been a prisoner in the Nevada State Prison for a year and a half.

welds. Prashkin owns large blocks of stock in Derwent Enterprises, High Country Investments, Fun Time Automatic Machines, and three Vegas casinos. Prashkin is clean in America, but was indicted in Mexico on fraud charges that were dropped quickly three weeks after they were brought. It has been suggested that Prashkin may be in charge of laundering money skimmed from Vegas casino operations and funneing the big bucks back into the organization's legitimate western operations. And such operations may now include the Overlook Hotel in Colorado.

Other visitors during the current season include . . .

There was more but Jack only skimmed it, constantly wiping his lips with his hand. A banker with Las Vegas connections. Men from New York who were apparently doing more in the Garment District than making clothes. Men reputed to be involved with drugs, vice, robbery, murder.

And what a story. And they had all been here, right above him, in those empty rooms. Screwing expensive whores in the third floor maybe. Drinking magnums of champagne. Making deals that would turn over millions of dollars. Maybe in the very suite of rooms where Presidents had stayed. There was a story, all right. One hell of a story. A little frantically, he took out his notepad and jotted down an inter memo to check all of these people out at the library in Denver when the caretaking job was over. Every hotel has its ghost? The Overlook had a whole coven of them. First suicide. Then the Mafia, what next?

The next clipping was an angry denial of Brannigan's charges by Charles Crawford. Jack smirked at it.

The clipping on the next page was so large that it had been folded. Jack unfolded it and gasped harshly. The picture there seemed to leap out at him. The wallpaper had been changed since June of 1966 but he knew that window and the view perfectly well. It was the western exposure of the Presidential Suite. Murder came next. The strong room wall by the door leading into the bedroom was splashed with blood and what could only be white flecks of brain matter. A bank-faced cop was standing over a corpse hidden by a basket. Jack stared, fascinated, and then his eyes moved up to the headline.

GANGLAND-STYLE SHOOTING AT COLORADO HOTEL

Reputed Crime Overlord Shot at Mountain Key Club
Two Others Dead

SINCE HIS 1940 CLIP Fifty miles from this sleepy Colorado town, a gangland-style execution has occurred in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. The Overlook Hotel, purchased three years ago as an exclusive key club by a Las Vegas firm, was the site of a triple shotgun slaying. Two of the men were either the companions or bodyguards of Victor Crone, also known as "The Chopper" for his epic involvement in a Best in slaying twenty years ago.

Police were summoned by Robert Norman, manager of the Overlook, who said he heard shots and that some of the guests reported two men wearing stockings on their faces and carrying guns had fled down the fire escape and driven off in a late-model tan convertible.

State Trooper Benjamin Myer discovered two dead men after identifying as Victor T. Boorman and Roger Malaya, both of Las Vegas, outside the door of the Presidential Suite where two American Presidents have stayed. Inside, Myer found the body of Crone, sprawled on the floor. Crone was apparently fleeing his attackers when he was cut down. Myer said Crone had been shot with heavy gauge shotguns at close range.

Charles Grondin, the representative of the company which now owns the Overlook, could not be reached for

Below the clipping, in heavy strokes of a ballpoint pen, someone had written: *They took his balls along with them.* Jack stared at that for a long time, feeling cold. Whose book was this?

He turned the page at last, swallowing a cluck in his throat. Another column from Josh Brannigan, this one dated early 1967. He only read the headline: NOTORIOUS HOTEL SCED FOLLOWING MURDER OF UNDERWORLD FIGURE.

The sheets following that clipping were blank.
(They took his balls along with them.)

He flipped back to the beginning, looking for a name or address. Even a room number. Because he felt quite sure that whoever had kept this little book of memories had stayed at the hotel. But there was nothing.

He was getting ready to go through all the clippings, more

closely this time, when a voice called down the stairs "Jack! Hon?"

Wendy

He started, almost gaily as if he had been drinking secretly and she would smell the fumes on him. Ridiculous. He scrubbed his lips with his hand and called back, "Yeah, babe. Look n for rats."

She was coming down. He heard her on the stairs then crossing the boiler room. Quickly without thinking why he might be doing it, he stuffed the scrapbook under a pile of bills and invoices. He stood up as she came through the arch.

"What in the world have you been doing down here? It's almost three o'clock!"

He smiled. "Is it that late? I got rooting around through all this stuff. Trying to find out where the bodies are buried. I guess."

The words echoed back vividly in his mind.

She came closer, looking at him, and he unconsciously retreated a step, unable to help himself. He knew what she was doing. She was trying to smell liquor on him. Probably she wasn't ever aware of it herself, but he was, and it made him feel both guilty and angry.

"Your mouth is bleeding," she said in a curiously flat tone.

"Huh?" He put his hand to his lips and winced at the stinging. His index finger came away bloody. His guilt increased.

"You've been rubbing your mouth again," she said.

He looked down and shrugged. "Yeah, I guess I have."

"It's been hell for you, hasn't it?"

"No, not so bad."

"Has it gotten any easier?"

He looked up at her and made his feet start moving. Once they were actually in motion it was easier. He crossed to his wife and slipped an arm around her waist. He brushed aside a strand of her hair and kissed her neck. "Yes," he said. "Where's Danny?"

"Oh, he's around somewhere. I's started to clean up outside. Hungry?"

He slipped a hand over her tight jeans-clad bottom with counterfeited lechery. "I like to bear, madame."

"Watch out, slugger. Don't start something you can't finish."

"Tig-ting, madame?" he asked, still rubbing. "Dirty pictures?"

Unlucky positions?" As they went through the arch, he threw one glance back at the box where the scrapbook (whose?)

was hidden. With the light on it was only a shadow. He was relieved that he had gotten Wendy away. His act became less acted, more natural, as they approached the stairs.

"Ma be," she said. "After we get you a sandwich. *peck*." She twisted away from him, giggling. "That tickles."

"It tickles nozzing like Jock Torrance would like to teekle you, madame."

"Lay off Jock. He was about a ham and cheese . . . for the first course?"

They went up the stairs together, and Jack didn't look over his shoulder again. But he thought of Watson's words.

Every big hotel has got a ghost. Why? Well, people come and go . . .

Then Wendy shut the basement door behind them, closing it into darkness.

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OUTSIDE 217

Danny was remembering the words of someone else who had worked at the Overlook during the season.

Her saying she'd seen something in one of the rooms where a bad thing happened. That was in Room 217 and I warn you . . . promise me you won't go in there. Danny . . . steer right clear . . .

It was a perfect yellow door, no different from any other door on the first two floors of the hotel. It was dark gray, but flew down a corridor that ran at right angles to the main second-floor hallway. The numbers on the door looked no different from the house numbers on the Boulder apartment building they had lived in. A 2, a 1, and a 7. Big idea. Just below them was a tiny glass circle, a peephole. Danny had used several of them. From the in-

see you and a whole lot better view of the corner. For in fact, we could screw up your eye seven ways a Sunday and still not see a thing. A dirty gyp.

(Why are you here?)

After he woke behind the O'clock Food Market many had come back and she had fixed him his favorite lunch—a cheese and tomato sandwich plus Campbell's Bean Soup. They ate in Daddy's kitchen and talked. The radio was on, getting thin and crackly music from the Estes Park station. The kitchen was his favorite place in the hotel, and he guessed that Mommy and Daddy must feel the same way, because after fixing their meals in the dining room for three days or so, they had been coming in the kitchen by morning to clean, setting up chairs, moving Dick's lawns chair back, which was almost as big as his room, to the room by his back in moving in anyway. The dining room had been full of cars, not even with the lights on and the radio playing, until he opened a secret system in the office. You were sure to find if these people staying at a hotel surrounded by dozens of other hotels, a happy atmosphere with those transparent plastic curtains. Mommy's car was like hanging dinner in the house of a Horace Walpole novel, and Daddy had laughed and agreed. Daddy had a heap with Horace Walpole was, but he did know what Mommy's cooking had begun to taste better as soon as they began to eat in the kitchen. He kept discovering little flashes of Dick's father's personality going on and on, and they reassured him like a warm touch.

Mommy had eaten half a sandwich, not soup. She said Daddy must have gone out for a walk or something, but he said he and the horse truck were in the parking lot. She said he was tired and ought to go down for an hour or so if he could, but she could always home if and not get into trouble. Daddy told her about a number of horses and brought her the thought of a horse.

Why don't you go out for the pigs and she asked him. "I should we had pigs, yes, a salmon, yes, and ducks and all."

It was a good idea, but the horses had to be kept in the yard dry and hard. At the time he was getting some more and fiddling with it.

"And all those nice bodied animals, like a salt, like his empty place. Your father got to get out and keep him pretty soon."

"Yeah," he said.

*(Just nasty things once I had to do with those damn
hedges o'pped to work the animals . . .)*

"If you see your father before I do, tell him I'm coming down."

"Sure, Mom."

She put the dirty dishes in the sink and came back over to him.
"Are you happy here, Danny?"

He looked at her guiltlessly, a meek mustache on his lip. "Uh-huh."

"No more bad dreams?"

"No." Tony had come to him once, one night, while he was
lying in bed, calling his name faintly and from far away. Danny
had squeezed his eyes tightly shut until Tony had gone.

"You sure?"

"Yes, Mom."

She seemed satisfied. "It's your land?"

He flexed it for her. "All better."

She nodded. Jack had taken the nest under the Pyrex bowl, full
of frozen wasps, out to the incinerator in back of the equipment
shed and burned it. They had seen no more wasps since. He had
written to a lawyer in Boulder, enclosing the snaps of Danny's
hand, and the lawyer had called back two days ago—that had put
Jack in a foul temper all afternoon. The lawyer doubted if the
company that had manufactured the big bomb could be sued suc-
cessfully because there was only Jack to testify that he had fol-
lowed directions printed on the package. Jack had asked the law-
yer if they couldn't purchase some others and test them for the
same defect. Yes, the lawyer said, but the results were highly
doubtful even if all the test bombs malfunctioned. He told Jack of
a case that involved an extension ladder company and a man who
had broken his back. Wendy had commiserated with Jack, but pri-
vately she had just been glad that Danny had gotten off as cheaply
as he had. It was best to leave lawsuits to people who understood
them and that did not include the Terrances. And they had seen
no more wasps since.

"Go and play, doc. Have fun."

But he hadn't had fun. He had wandered aimlessly around the
house, poking into the maid's closets and the painter's rooms, look-
ing for some thing interesting, not finding it, a small boy padding

above a dark blue corpse was now his white black face. He had tried a room door from the inside but the door had been locked. The passkey was hanging down in the middle of the pass were but Danny had tried him a door. He had tried. And he didn't want to. Did he?

(Why are you here?)

There was nothing strange about it. First of all, he had been drawn to Room 27 by a most beautiful fairy story. He remembered a story Dorothy had read to him once when he was young. That had been a long time ago but the story was as vivid now as when Dorothy had read it to him. Memory had seared Danny and he knew what he was doing, reading a three year old book by something so horrible. The name of the story was *Bluebeard*. That was clear in his mind now, because he had thought at last Dorothy was saying *Bluebeard* and there were no bluebeards in the story, no bluebeards any kind for that matter. Actually the story was about *Bluebeard's* wife, a pretty lady that had come to court him like *Mary*. After *Bluebeard* married her, they lived in a big and ominous castle and was not unlike the Overlook. And every day *Bluebeard* went off to work and every day he would tell his pretty little wife not to work in a certain room although the key to that room was hanging right on a hook just like the passkey was hanging on the office wall downstairs. *Bluebeard's* wife had gotten more and more curious about the locked room. She tried to peep through the keyhole the way Danny had tried to look through Room 27's peephole with similar unimpressive results. There was even a picture of her getting down on her knees and trying to look under the door but the crack wasn't wide enough. The door swung wide and

The old fairy tale book had depicted her discovery in glorious loving detail. The image was burned in Danny's mind. The severed heads of *Bluebeard's* seven previous wives were in the room, each one on its own pedestal. The eyes looked up at the mouths hanging and gaping in silent screams. They were somehow balanced on necks ragged from the heads which were swinging and there was blood running down the pedestals.

Terrified, she had turned to flee from the room and he could only to discover *Bluebeard* staring in the doorway, his terrible eyes blazing. "I told you not to enter this room. *Bluebeard* said unsheathing his sword "Alas, in your curiosity you are like the

other severed and though I need you, best of friends, and I'll be as was the rest. Prepare to be wretched woman!

I seemed vaguely to Danny that the story had had a happy ending, but had had paled to insignificance beside the two dominant images: the taunting, maddening locked door with some great secret behind it, and the grisly secret itself repeated more than half a dozen times. The locked door and behind a pile heads, the severed heads.

His hand reached down and struck the room's door in his most furtive way. He had no idea how long he had been here, standing hypnotized before the banister-graced door.

And now, three times I've thought I've seen things - nasty things - . . .)

But Mr. Hal, wasn't Dick told a so said he didn't think these things could hurt you. They were like scary pictures in a book, that was all. And maybe he wouldn't see anything. On the other hand . . .

He plunged his left hand into his pocket and it came out holding the passkey. It had been there all along, of course.

He held it by the square metal tab on the end which had one of the printed on it in Magic Marker. He twirled the key on its chain, watching it go around and around. After several minutes of this he stopped and slipped the passkey into the lock. It slid in smoothly with no hiccups as if it had wanted to be there all along.

(I've thought I've seen what is - really, it has - promised me you won't go in there.)

(I promise.)

And a promise was of course very important. Still his curiosity tickled at him as maddeningly as poison ivy in a place you aren't supposed to scratch. But it was a dreadful kind of curiosity, the kind that makes you peek through your fingers during the scariest parts of a scary movie. What was beyond that door would be no movie.

(I don't think those things can hurt you - like scary pictures in a book - . . .)

Suddenly he reached out with his left hand, not sure of what it was going to do until it had removed the passkey and stuffed it back into his pocket. He stared at the door a moment longer,

the goggles were then turned quick and walked back down the corridor where he met his way to the dining tables. In the corridor he was in

Something made him pause where and he was not sure what for a moment. Then he remembered the dusts at the end of his corner on the way back to the stairs. There was one of those old-fashioned fire extinguishers curled up against the wall. Curled there like a dozing snake.

They were chemical-type extinguishers at all. Dadiv said. Although there were several of those in the kitchen. These were the fire danger of the modern sprinkler systems. The long canvas hoses hooked directly into the Overalls plumbing system, and by turning a large valve you could become a one-man fire department. Dadiv said that the chemical extinguishers which sprayed foam or foam were much better. The chemical smothered fires. Foam was the oxygen they needed to burn while a high pressure spray might just spread the flames around. Dadiv said that Mr. Uman should replace the old-fashioned hoses right along with the old-fashioned broom but Mr. Uman would probably do neither because he was a cheap prick. Danny knew that this was one of the worst epithets his father could summon. It was applied to cleaners and doctors, dentists, and appliance repairmen, and also to the head of his English Department at Savington who had answered some of Dadiv's book orders because he said the books would put them over budget. Over budget he had forgotten Wendy. Danny had been listening from his bedroom where he was supposed to be asleep. His father saying he had five hundred bucks for him if the cheap prick

Danny looked around the corner

The extinguisher was there, a flat hose rolled back a dozen times on itself the red tank a wheel where he was. Above it was an axe in a glass case like a museum exhibit with white words printed on a red background IN CASE OF EMERGENCY BREAK GLASS. Danny could read he was EMERGENCY which was also the name of one of his favorite TV shows, but was unsure of the rest. But he didn't like the way the word was used in connection with that long flat hose. EMERGENCY was fire, explosions, car or street accidents, sometimes death. And he didn't like the way that hose was

here so nobody on the wall. When he was alone, he always skittered past these extinguishers as fast as he could. No particular reason. It just felt better to go fast. It felt safer.

Now heart thumping loudly in his chest, he came around the corner and looked down the hall past the extinguisher to the stairs. Mommy was down there, sleeping. And if Daddy was back from his walk, he would probably be sitting in the kitchen, eating a sandwich and reading a book. He would just walk right past his old extinguisher and go on upstairs.

He started toward it, moving closer to the far wall until his right arm was brushing the expensive silk paper. Twenty steps away. Fifteen. A dozen.

When he was ten steps away, the brass nozzle suddenly rolled off the fat loop it had been lying

(sleeping?)

on and fell to the hall carpet with a dull thump. Lying there, the dark bore of its muzzle pointing at Danny. He stopped immediately, his shoulders twitching forward with the suddenness of his scare. His blood thumped thickly in his ears and temples. His mouth had gone dry and sour, his hands curled into fists. Yet the nozzle of the hose only lay there, its brass casing glowing mellowly, a loop of flat canvas leaning back up to the red painted frame bolted to the wall.

So it had fallen off, so what? It was only a fire extinguisher, nothing else. It was stupid to think that it looked like some poison snake from "Wide World of Animals" that had heard him and woken up. Even if the stretched canvas did look a little brass scars. He would just step over it and go down the hall to the stairs, walking a little bit fast, maybe, to make sure it didn't snap out after him and curl around his foot.

He wiped his lips with his left hand, in unconscious imitation of his father, and took a step forward. No movement from the hose. Another step. Nothing. There, see how stupid you are? You got all worked up thinking about that dumb room and that dumb *Buebeard* story and that hose was probably ready to fall off for the last five years. That's all.

Danny stared at the hose on the floor and thought of wasps.

Eight steps away, the nozzle of the hose gleamed peacefully at

him from the rig as if to say *Don't worry, I'm just a little thing, a bee. And even if that isn't all, what I do for you wasn't as much worse than a bee sting. Or a wasp sting. What would I want to do to a nice little boy like you—except bite—and bite—and bite?*

Daddy took another step and another. His breath was dry and harsh in his throat. Panic was close now. He began to wish the house would move, then at last he would know he would be safe. He took another step and now he was within striking distance. But it's not going to strike at you, he thought hysterically. How can it strike at you, bite at you when it's just a little bee?

Maybe it's full of wasps.

His internal temperature plummeted to ten below zero. He stared at the black hole in the corner of the nozzle, nearly hypnotized. Maybe it was full of wasps, secret wasps, the brown bodies beaded with poison, so full of autumn poison that it dripped from their stingers in clear drops of fluid.

Suddenly he knew that he was nearly frozen with terror. He did not make his feet go now, they would become locked to the carpet and he would stay here, staring at the black hole in the center of the brass nozzle like a bird staring at a snake. He would stay here until his daddy found him and then what would happen?

With a high moan, he made himself run. As he reached the house, some trick of the night made the nozzle seem to move to reverse itself to strike and he leaped high to be at a height in his panicky state. It seemed that his legs pushed him nearly all the way to the ceiling, that he could feel the stiff back hairs that formed his cowlick brushing the hallway's plaster ceiling, although later he knew that couldn't have been so.

He came down on the other side of the house and ran and suddenly he heard it behind him, coming for him, the soft dry whicker of that brass snake's head as it swished rapidly along the carpet after him like a rattlesnake moving swiftly through a dry field of grass. It was coming for him, and suddenly he was so seemed very far away. They seemed to repeat a running step into the distance for each running step he took toward him.

Daddy! he tried to scream, but his closed throat would not allow a word to pass. He was on his own. Behind him the sound

grew louder. The dry sizzling sound of the snake slapping swiftly over the carpet's dry hackles. At his heels now, perhaps rising up with clear poison dribbling from its brass snout.

Danny reached the stairs and had to pinwheel his arms crazily for balance. For one moment it seemed sure that he would cartwheel over and go head-for heels to the bottom.

He threw a glance back over his shoulder.

The hose had not moved. It lay as it had been, one loop off the frame, the brass nozzle on the half floor, the nozzle pointing disinterestedly away from him. You see, stupid? he berated himself. You made it all up, scaredy-cat. I was a your imagination, scaredy-cat, scaredy-cat.

He clung to the stairway railing, his legs trembling in reaction
(*It never chased you*)

his mind told him, and seized in that thought and played it back.

never chased you never chased you never did never did

It was nothing to be afraid of. Why, he could go back and put that hose right into its frame, if he wanted to. He could, but he didn't think he would. Because what if it had chased him and had gone back when it saw that it couldn't quite catch him?

The hose lay on the carpet, almost seeming to ask him if he would like to come back and try again.

Panting, Danny ran downstairs.

20

TALKING TO MR. ULLMAN

The Sedwinder Public Library was a small, retiring building one block down from the town's business area. It was a modest, vine-covered building, and the wide concrete walk up to the door was lined with the corpses of last summer's flowers. On the lawn was a large bronze statue of a Civil War general Jack had never heard

of a though he had been something of a City War buff in his teenage years.

The newspaper files were kept down in his. They consisted of the *Sidewinder Gazette* that had gone bust in 1963, the *Estes Park daily*, and the *Brander Camera*. No Denver papers here.

Sitting Jack settled on the *Camera*.

When he files reached 1955, the actual newspapers were replaced by spools of microfilm. A fellow grad—the Librarian—told him briefly: "We hope to do 1958 to '64 when the next check comes through but they're a show aren't they? You will be careful with 'em?" Jack knew you will. Call if you need me." The tiny reading machine had a lens that had somehow gotten warped, and by the time Wendy put her hand on his shoulder some forty-five minutes after he had switched from the actual papers, he had a very hamper of a headache.

"Darn it in the park," she said, "but I don't want him outside too long. How much longer do you think you'll be?"

Ten minutes, he said. Act as if he had traced down the rest of the Overlook's fascinating history—the years between the gangland shooting and the takeover by Stuart L. Moran & Co. But he felt the same reluctance about telling Wendy.

"What are you up to, anyway?" she asked. She rubbed his hair as she said it, but her voice was only half-easing.

"Looking up some old Overlook history," he said.

"Any particular reason?"

"No,

—and we—the hell are you so interested in, well?

just curiosity."

"Find anything interesting?"

"Not much," he said, having to strive to keep his voice pleasant now. She was prying, just the way she had always pried and poked at him when they had been at S. Livingston and Danny was still a crib plant. *Where are you going Jack? When will you be back? How much money do you have with you? Are you going to take the car? Is Al going to be with you? Will one of you stay sober?* On and on. She had, pardon the expression, driven him to drink. Maybe that hadn't been the only reason, but by Christ let's tell the truth here and admit it was one of them. Nag and nag and nag until you wanted to clout her one just to shut her up and stop the

(Where? when? How? Are you? What you?)

endless flow of questions. I could give you a real
(headache? hangover?)

headache. The reader. The damned reader with its distorted
print. That was why he had such a constant headache.

"Jack, are you all right? You look pale—"

He snapped his head away from her fingers. "I am fine."

She recoiled from his hot eyes and tried on a smile that was a
size too small. "Well . . . if you are . . . I'll just go and wait in
the park with Danny . . ." She was starting away now, her smile
unsetting into a bewildered expression of hurt.

He called to her. "Wendy?"

She looked back from the foot of the stairs. "What, Jack?"

He got up and went over to her. "I'm sorry, babe. I guess I'm
really not all right. That machine . . . the lens is distorted. I've
got a real bad headache. Got any aspirin?"

"Sure." She pawed in her purse and came up with a tin of
Anacin. "You keep them."

He took the tin. "No Excedrin?" He saw the small recoil on her
face and understood. It had been a bitter sort of joke between
them at first, before the drinking had gotten too bad for jokes. He
had claimed that Excedrin was the only nonprescription drug ever
invented that could stop a hangover dead in its tracks. Absolutely
the only one. He had begun to think of his morning-after
temper as Excedrin Headache Number Vat 69.

No Excedrin? she said. "Sorry."

"That's okay," he said. "These I do just fine." But of course
they wouldn't, and she should have known it, too. At times she
could be the stupidest bitch . . .

"Want some water?" she asked brightly.

(No I just want you to GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE!)

"I'll get some at the drinking fountain when I go up. Thanks."

"Okay." She started up the stairs, good legs moving gracefully
under a short tan wool skirt. "We'll be in the park."

"Right." He slipped the tin of Anacin absently into his pocket,
went back to the reader and turned it off. When he was sure she
was gone, he went upstairs himself. God, but it was a lousy head-
ache. If you were going to have a vise-gripper like this one, you
ought to at least be allowed the pleasure of a few drinks to ban-
ance it off.

He tried to put the thought from his mind, more self-tempered than ever. He went to the main desk, fingering a matchbook cover with a telephone number on it.

"Ma'am, do you have a pay telephone?"

"No, sir, but you can use mine if it's local."

"It's long-distance, sorry."

"Well, then, I guess the drugstore would be your best bet. They have a booth."

"Thanks."

He went out and down the walk, past the anonymous Civil War general. He began to walk toward the business block, hands stuffed in his pockets, head budding like a leavened ball. The sky was also eaten; it was November 7, and with the new month the weather had become threatening. There had been a number of snow flurries. There had been snow in October too, but that had melted. The new flurries had stayed, a light frosting over everything. It sparkled in the sunlight like fine crystal. But there had been no sunlight today, and even as he reached the drugstore it began to spit snow again.

The phone booth was at the back of the building, and he was halfway down an aisle of patent medicines, fingering his change in his pocket, when his eyes fell on the white boxes with their green print. He took one of them to the cashier, paid, and went back to the telephone booth. He pulled the door closed, put his change and matchbook cover on the counter, and dialed 0.

"Your call, please?"

"Fort Lauderdale, Florida, operator." He gave her the number there and the number in the book. When she told him it would be a dollar ninety for the first three minutes, he dropped eight quarters into the slot, waiting each time the bell rang in his ear.

Then, left alone with only the faraway clinkings and gabbings of ~~connections~~ ~~connections~~ making, he took the green bottle of Excedrin out of its box, pried up the white cap, and dropped the wad of cotton hanging to the floor of the booth. Cradling the phone receiver between his ear and shoulder, he shook out three of the white tablets and lined them up on the ~~counter~~ beside his remaining change. He recapped the bottle and put it in his pocket.

At the other end, the phone was picked up in the first ring.

"Surf Surf Resort, how may we help you?" the perky female voice asked.

"I'd like to speak with the manager, please."

"Do you mean Mr. Trent or—"

"I mean Mr. Ullman."

"I believe Mr. Ullman is busy, but if you would like me to check—"

"I would. Tell him it's Jack Torrance calling from Colorado."

"One moment, please." She put him on hold.

Jack's dislike for that cheap self-important little prick Ullman came flooding back. He took one of the Excedrins from the counter, regarded it for a moment, then put it into his mouth and began to chew it, slowly and with relish. The taste flooded back like memory, making his saliva squirt in mingled pleasure and unhappiness. A dry, bitter taste, but a comforting one. He swallowed with a grimace. Chewing aspirin had been a habit with him in his drinking days, he hadn't done it at all since then. But when your head aches, he was had enough, a hangover headache or one like this one, chewing them seemed to make them go away quicker. He had read somewhere that chewing aspirin could become addictive. Where had he read that, anyway? Frowning, he tried to think. And then Ullman came on the line.

"Torrance? What's the trouble?"

"No trouble," he said. "The hotel's okay and I haven't even gotten around to murdering my wife yet." He said that with a bit of the humor, when things got serious.

"Very funny. Why are you calling? I'm a busy."

"Be a man, yes. I understand that." He was going about some things that you don't tell me during your history. The Overlook's great and honorable past. Like how H. Rance Derwent sold it to a bunch of Las Vegas sharpies who dealt through so many gambling corporations, but not even the IRS knew who really owned it. About how they waited until he gave was agreed to, then turned it into a playground for Mafia bigwigs, and about how it had to be shut down in 1966 when one of them got a little bit stupid. Along with his bodyguards, who were running out of the door in the Presidential Suite. Great place, the Overlook's Presidential Suite. Wilson, Harding, Roosevelt, Nixon, and even the Chopper, right?"

There was a moment of surprised silence on the other end of the line, and then Ullman said quietly, "I don't see how that can have any bearing on your job, Mr. Torrance. It . . ."

"The best part happened after Gienelli was shot, though, don't you think? Two more quick shuffles, now you see it and now you don't, and then the Overlook is suddenly owned by a private citizen, a woman named Sylvia Hunter—who just happened to be Sylvia Hunter Derwent from 1942 to 1948."

"Your three minutes are up," the operator said. "Signa when through."

"My dear Mr. Torrance, all of this is public knowledge—and ancient history."

"It formed no part of my knowledge," Jack said. "I doubt if many other people know it either. Not all of it. They remember the Gienelli shooting, maybe, but I doubt if anybody has put together all the wondrous and strange shuffles the Overlook has been through since '445. And it always seems like Derwent or a Derwent associate comes up with the door prize. What was Sylvia Hunter running up there in '67 and '68, Mr. Ullman? It was a whorehouse, wasn't it?"

"Torrance!" His shock crackled across two thousand miles of telephone cable without losing a ring.

Smiling, Jack popped another Excedrin into his mouth and chewed it.

She sold out after a rather well-known U.S. senator died of a heart attack up there. There were rumors that he was found naked except for black nylon stockings and a garter belt and a pair of high-heeled pumps. Patent-leather pumps as a matter of fact.

"That's a vicious, damnable lie," Ullman cried.

"Is it?" Jack asked. He was beginning to feel better. The headache was draining away. He took the last Excedrin and chewed it up, enjoying the bitter, powdery taste as the tablet shredded in his mouth.

"I was a very unfortunate occurrence," Ullman said. "Now what is the point, Torrance? If you're planning to write some ugly smear article—if this is some I-conceived, supra-blackmail idea..."

"Nothing of the sort," Jack said. "I called because I didn't think you played square with me. And because—"

"Didn't play square?" Ullman cried. "My God, did you think I was going to share a large pile of dirty laundry with the hotel's caretaker? Who in heaven's name do you think you are?" And now could those old stones possibly affect you anyway? Or do you

think there are ghosts parading up and down the halls of the west wing wearing bedsheets and crying 'Woe!'"

"No. I don't think there are any ghosts. But you raked up a lot of my personal history before you gave me the job. You had me on the carpet, quizzing me about my ability to take care of your hotel like a little boy in front of the teacher's desk for peeing in the classroom. You embarrassed me."

"I just do not believe your cheek, your bloody damned impertinence," Luman said. He sounded as if he might be choking. "I'd like to sack you. And perhaps I will."

"I think Al Shockley might object. Strenuous v."

"And I think you may have finally overestimated Mr. Shockley's commitment to you, Mr. Torrance."

For a moment Jack's headache came back in all its thudding glory, and he closed his eyes against the pain. As if from a distance away he heard himself ask, "Who owns the Overlook now? Is it still Derwent Enterprises? Or are you too small fry to know?"

"I think that will do, Mr. Torrance. You are an employee of the hotel, no different from a busboy or a kitchen pot scrubber. I have no intention of—"

"Okay. I'll write Al," Jack said. "He'll know, after a while, on the Board of Directors. And I might just add a little P.S. to the effect that—"

"Derwent doesn't own it."

"What? I couldn't quite make that out."

"I said Derwent doesn't own it. The stockholders are all Easterners. Your friend Mr. Shockley owns the largest block of stock himself, better than thirty-five per cent. You would know better than I if he has any ties to Derwent."

"Who else?"

"I have no intention of divulging the names of the other stockholders to you, Mr. Torrance. I intend to bring this whole matter to the attention of—"

"One other question."

"I am under no obligation to you."

"Most of the Overlook's history—savory and unsavory alike—I found in a scrapbook that was in the cellar. Big thing with white leather covers. Gold thread for binding. Do you have any idea whose scrapbook that might be?"

"None at all."

"Is it possible it could have belonged to Grady? The car owner who killed himself?"

"Mr. Torrance," Ulman said in tones of deepest frost. "I am by no means sure that Mr. Grady could read, let alone dig out the rotten apples you have been wasting my time with."

"I'm thinking of writing a book about the Overlook Hotel. I thought if I actually got through it, the owner of the scrapbook would like to have an acknowledgment at the front."

"I think writing a book about the Overlook would be very unwise," Ulman said. "Especially a book done from your particular point of view."

"Your opinion doesn't surprise me." His headache was still gone now. There had been that one flash of pain, and that was all. His mind felt sharp and accurate, all the way down to his fingers. It was the way he usually felt only when the writing was going extremely well or when he had a three-link buzz on. That was one other thing he had forgotten about Excedrin: he didn't know if it worked for others, but for him crunching three tablets was like an instant high.

Now he said, "What you'd like is some sort of commission. I guess I think that you could hand out free to the guests when they checked in. Something with a lot of glossy photos of the mountains at sunrise and sunset and a lemon meringue text to go with it. A special section on the colorful people who have stayed here, of course excluding the really colorful ones like Clotel and his friends."

"If I do, I could fire you and be a hundred per cent certain of my own job instead of just ninety-five per cent," Ulman said in clipped, stung tones. "I would fire you right this minute over the telephone. But since I feel but five per cent of uncertainty, I intend to call Mr. Shockley the moment you're off the line, which will be soon, or so I devoutly hope."

Jack said, "There isn't going to be anything in the book that isn't true, you know. There's no need to dress it up."

(Why are you hating him? Do you want to be fired?)

"I don't care if Chapter Five is about the Pope of Rome screwing the shade of the Virgin Mary," Ulman said, his voice rising. "I want you out of my hotel."

It's not your fault Jack screamed and tossed the ruler into its cradle.

His face the same as he had had a while scared now,
(a little? hell, a lot)

wondering why not a name of God he had called Ullman in the first place.

You are a very clever dear Jack

Yes Yes he had. No sense trying to deny it. And the best of it was, he had picked how much influence that cheap little prick would have. All no more than he knew how much half-shot A would take from him in the name of auld lang syne. If Ullman was as good as he seemed, he said if he gave A a beguise or I guess that ain't right nor A he fixed to take it? He closed his eyes and tried to make something Wotay. Guess what? baby? I just another job. It's true I had to go through two thousand miles a B. To catch the cable to find someone to punch card but I managed it.

He opened his eyes and wiped his mouth with his handkerchief. He wanted a drink. He needed one. There was a cafe just down the street sure, he had time for a quick beer on his way up the park just one to wash the dust.

He clenched his hands together helplessly.

The question recurred. Why had he called Ullman in the first place. The number of the St. St. Sand in Laureate had been written in a small notebook by the phone and the CB radio in the corner—plumbers, painters, carpenters, gardeners, electricians, etc. Jack wrote pencil on the notebook cover. He was after going out if he had the idea of casting Ullman in a two and a half hour movie. But what purpose? Once during the drink phase Wotay had accused him of desiring his own destruction for not possessing the necessary moral fiber to support a life of own deathwish. So he manufactured works in which other people were doing things a piece at a time. If himself and the other four.

Could he be there? Was he afraid somewhere inside that the Overlook might be just what he needed to finish his previous grand crack. He did it up his mind and go it together? Was he knowing he was on his own? Please God no, don't let it be his way. Please.

He closed his eyes and for three minutes of course on the darkened screen of his inner life, working his hand through that hole

in the shingles to pull out the rotted flashing the sudden needling stung his own agonized, startled cry in the still and unheating air. *Oh you goddam fucking son of a bitch*

Replaced with an image two years earlier himself stumbling into the house at three in the morning, drunk, falling over a table and sprawling full-length on the floor, cursing, waking Wendy up on the couch. Wendy turning on the light, seeing his clothes ripped and smeared from some cloudy parking-lot scuffle that had occurred at a vaguely remembered booky-book just over the New Hampshire border hours before, crusted blood under his nose, now looking up at his wife, blinking stupidly in the light like a mole in the sunshine and Wendy saying dully *You son of a bitch you woke Danny up. If you don't care about yourself, can't you care a little bit about us?* Oh, why am I even bother talking to you?

The telephone rang, making him jump. He snatched it off the cradle, logically sure it must be either Ullman or A. Shockley. "What?" he barked.

Your overtime, sir. Three dollars and fifty cents.

I have to break some ones," he said. "Wait a minute."

He put the phone on the shelf, deposited his last six quarters, then went out to the cashier to get more. He performed the transaction automatically, his mind running in a single closed circle like a squirrel on an exercise wheel.

Why had he called Ullman?

Because Ullman had embarrassed him? He had been embarrassed before, and by real masters—the Grand Master, of course, being himself. Simply to crow at the man, expose his hypocrisy? Jack didn't think he was that petty. His mind tried to seize on the seraphuck as a valid reason, but that would be a bad water cooler. The chances of Ullman knowing who the owner was were no more than two in a thousand. At the interview he had treated the case as another country, a past interview, possibly at that. If he had really wanted to know, he would have called Watson, whose water number was a section of the office no-man's-land. Even Watson would not have been a sure thing, but surer than Ullman.

And telling him about the book idea. That had been another stupid thing. Incredibly stupid. Besides jeopardizing his job, he could be closing off wide channels of information about Ullman's cler-

around and told people to beware of New Englanders hearing questions about the Overlook Hotel. He could have done his research quietly making off police letters, perhaps even arranging some interviews in the spring—and then laughed up his sleeve at Ullman's rage when he took him out and he was safely away—The Masked Author Strikes Again. Instead he had made that damned senseless call, lost his temper, antagonized Ullman, and brought out all of the hotel manager's Linda Caesar tendencies. Why? If it wasn't an effort to get himself thrown out of the good job Al had snagged for him then what was it?

He deposited the rest of the money in the slots and hung up the phone. It really was the senseless kind of thing he might have done if he had been drunk. But he had been sober, dead or sober.

Walking out of the drugstore he crunched another Excedrin into his mouth, grinning yet relishing the bitter taste.

On the walk outside he met Wendy and Danny.

"How, we were just coming after you," Wendy said. "Snowing, don't you know?"

Jack blinked up. "Snowing?" It was snowing hard. Snowminder's main street was already heavily powdered, the center line obscured. Danny had his head tilted up to the white sky, his mouth open and his tongue out to catch some of the fat flakes drifting down.

"Do you think this is it?" Wendy asked.

Jack shrugged. "I don't know. I was hoping for a rather week or two of grace. Well, I might get it."

Grace, that was it.

(I'm sorry. A. Grade your mercy for your merit. One more chance. I am heartily sorry—)

How many times, over how many years, had he asked grown men asked for the mercy of another chance? He was suddenly so sick of himself, so revolted, that he could have groaned aloud.

"How's your headache?" she asked, studying him closely.

He put an arm around her and hugged her tight. "Better. Come on, you two. Let's go home where we sit it out."

They walked back to where the hotel truck was slant-parked against the curb. Jack in the middle, his left arm around Wendy's shoulders, his right hand holding Danny's hand. He had called it home for the first time, for better or worse.

As he got behind the truck's wheel it occurred to him that while he was fascinated by the Overlook, he didn't much like it. He wasn't sure it was good for either his wife or his son or himself. Maybe that was why he had called Ulman.

To be fired while there was still time.

He backed the truck out of its parking space and headed them out of town and up into the mountains.

21

NIGHT THOUGHTS

It was ten o'clock. Their quarters were filled with counterfeit sleep.

Jack lay on his side facing the wall, eyes open, listening to Wendy's slow and regular breathing. The taste of dissolved aspirin was still on his tongue, making it feel rough and slightly numb. A Snockley had called at quarter of six, quarter of eight back East. Wendy had been downstairs with Danny, sitting in front of the lobby fireplace and reading.

"Person to person," the operator said, "for Mr. Jack Torrance."

"Speaking." He had switched the phone to his right hand, had dug his handkerchief out of his back pocket with his left, and had wiped his tender lips with it. Then he lit a cigarette.

Al's voice then, strong in his ear. "Jacky-boy, what in the name of God are you up to?"

"Hi, Al." He snuffed the cigarette and groped for the Excedrin bottle.

"What's going on, Jack? I got this weird phone call from Stuart Ulman this afternoon. And when Stu Ulman calls long-distance out of his own pocket, you know the shit has hit the fan."

"Ulman has nothing to worry about, Al. Neither do you."

"What exactly is the nothing we don't have to worry about? Stu made it sound like a cross between blackmail and a *National Enquirer* feature on the Overlook. Talk to me, boy."

"I wanted to poke him a little," Jack said. "When I came up here to be interviewed, he had to bring out all my dirty laundry. Drinking problem. Lost your last job for racking over a student. Wonder if you're the right man for this. Etcetera. The thing that bugged me was that he was bringing it all's up because he loved the goddam hotel so much. The beautiful Overlook. The prestigious Overlook. The bloody sacred Overlook. Well, I found a scumbunk in the basement. Somebody had put together all the less savory aspects of Loman's cathexis, and it looked to me like a little black mass had been going on after hours."

"I hope that's metaphorical, Jack." A's voice sounded frighteningly cold.

"It is. But I did find out."

"I know the hotel's history."

Jack ran a hand through his hair. "So I called him up and poked him with it. I admit it wasn't very bright, and I sure wouldn't do it again. End of story."

"She says you're planning to do a little dirty laundry on your yourself."

"You're an asshole," he barked into the phone. "I told him I had no idea of writing about the Overlook, yes, I do. I think it is place forms an index of the whole post World War II American character. That sounds like an inflated claim, stated so badly. . . . I know it does, . . . but it's all here. Al. My God, it could be a *great* book. But it's far in the future. I can promise you that. I've got more on my plate right now than I can eat, and —"

"Jack, that's not good enough."

He found himself gazing at the black receiver of the phone, unable to believe what he had surely heard. "What? A, did you say—?"

"I said what I said. How long is far in the future, Jack? For you it may be two years, maybe five. For me, it's thirty or forty, because I expect to be associated with the Overlook for a long time. The thought of you doing some sort of a scam-job on my hotel and passing off as a great piece of American writing, that makes me sick."

Jack was speechless.

"I tried to help you, Jacky boy. We went through the war to-

go her, and I thought I owed you some help. You remember the war?"

"I remember it," he muttered, but the coals of resentment had begun to glow around his heart. First Liam, then Wendy, now Al. What was this? National Let's Pick Jack Torrance Apart Week? He clamped his lips more tightly together, reached for his cigarettes, and knocked them off onto the floor. Had he ever liked this cheap prick taking to him from his mahogany-lined den in Vermont? Had he really?

"Before you hit that Hatfield kid," Al was saying, "I had talked the Board out of letting you go and even had them swing around to considering tenure. You blew that one for yourself. I got you a hotel thing, a nice quiet place for you to get yourself together, finish your play, and wait it out until Harry Effinger and I could convince the rest of those guys that they made a big mistake. Now it looks like you want to chew my arm off on your way to a bigger thing. Is that the way you say thanks to your friends, Jack?"

"No," he whispered.

He didn't dare say more. His head was throbbing with the hot, acid-etched words that wanted to get out. He tried desperately to think of Danny and Wendy depending on him, Danny and Wendy sitting peacefully downstairs in front of the fire and working on the first of the second-grade reading primers, thinking everything was A-OK. I've lost his job, what then? Off to California in that tired old VW with the distragrating fuel pump like a family of dustbowl Owies? He told himself he would get down on his knees and beg Al before he let that happen, but the words struggled to pour out, and the hand holding the hot wires of his rage felt greased.

"What?" Al said sharply.

"No," he said. "That is not the way I treat my friends. And you know it."

"How do I know it? At the worst, you're planning to smear my hotel by digging up bones that were decently buried years ago. At the best, you call up my temperament, but extremely competent hotel manager and work him into a frenzy as part of some . . . some stupid kid's game."

"I was more than a game, Al. It's easier for you. You don't

I've got to take some rich friend's charity. You don't need a friend in court because you are the court. The fact that you were one step from a brown-bag lasso goes pretty much unmentioned, doesn't it?"

"I suppose it does." Al said. His voice had dropped a notch and he sounded tired of the whole thing. "But Jack, Jack . . . I can't help that. I can't change that."

"I know," Jack said simply. "Am I hired? I guess you better hire me if I am."

"Not if you'll do two things for me."

"All right."

"Haven't you better hear the conditions before you accept them?"

"No. Give me your deal and I'll take it. There's Wendy and Danny to think about. If you want my balls, I'll send them airmail."

"Are you sure self-pity is a luxury you can afford, Jack?"

He had closed his eyes and said an Exceeding between his dry lips. "At this point I feel it's the only one I can afford. Fire away . . . no pun intended."

Al was silent for a moment. Then he said, "First, no more calls to U-Man. Not even if the place burns down. If that happens, call the maintenance man, that guy who swears all the time, you know who I mean . . ."

"Watson."

"Yes."

"Okay. Done."

"Second, you promise me, Jack. Word of honor. No book about a famous Colorado mountain hotel with a history."

For a moment his rage was so great that he literally could not speak. The blood beat loudly in his ears. It was like getting a call from some twentieth-century Medicor prince . . . no portraits of my family with their warts showing, please, or back to the rabbie you'll go. I subsidize no pictures but pretty pictures. When you paint the daughter of my good friend and business partner, please omit birthmark or back to the rabbie you'll go. Of course we're friends . . . we are both civilized men, aren't we? We've shared bed and board and bottle. We'll always be friends, and the dog collar I have on you will always be ignored by mutual consent.

and I'll take good and benevolent care of you. Al, I ask in return is your soul. Small price. We can even ignore the fact that you've handed it over, the way we ignore the dog collar. Remember, my talented friend, there are Michele Angelos begging everywhere in the streets of Rome . . .

"Jack? You there?"

He made a strangled noise that was intended to be the word yes.

Al's voice was firm and very sure of itself. "I really don't think I'm asking so much, Jack. And there will be other books. You just can't expect me to subsidize you while you . . ."

"All right, agreed."

"I don't want you to think I'm trying to control your artistic life, Jack. You know me better than that. It's just that—"

"Al?"

"What?"

"Is Derwent still involved with the Overlook? Somehow?"

"I don't see how that can possibly be any concern of yours, Jack."

"No," he said distantly. "I suppose it isn't. Listen, Al, I think I hear Wendy calling me for something. I'll get back to you."

"Sure thing, Jacky-boy. We'll have a good talk. How are things? Dry?"

(YOU'VE GOT YOUR POUND OF FLESH BLOOD AND ALL NOW CAN'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE?)

"As a bone."

Here too. I'm actually beginning to enjoy sobriety. If . . .

"I'll get back, Al. Wendy—"

"Sure. Okay."

And so he had hung up and that was when the cramps had come, hitting him like lightning bolts, making him curl up in front of the telephone like a penitent, hands over his belly, head throbbing like a monstrous bladder.

The moving wasp, having stung, moves on . . .

It had passed a little when Wendy came upstairs and asked him who had been on the phone.

"Al," he said. "He called to ask how things were going. I said they were fine."

"Jack, you look terrible. Are you sick?"

"If Jack's back, I'm going to bully him. No sense trying to write."

"Can I get you some warm milk?"

"I suppose so, yes. I don't would he mind?"

And now he lay beside her, feeling her warm and leaping high against his own. Thinking of the conversation with Al, how he had grown cold, still made him hot and cold by turns. Someday there would be a reckoning. Someday there would be a break in the soft and thoughtful thing he had first considered, but a gem hard work of research, photo section and a lot, and he would pull apart the engine Overlook history, nasty, incestuous, ownership, lease and all. He would spread it all out for the reader like a dissected crayfish. And if Al Shockley had connections with the Derwent empire, then God help him.

Springing up like piano wire, he lay's arm up into the dark, knowing it might be hours yet before he could sleep.

* * *

Wendy Terrace lay on her back, eyes closed, listening to the sound of her husband's snoring. The song inhaled, he breathed, the slight, a guttural exhale. Where did he go when he slept, she wondered. To some amusement park, a Great Barrington of dreams where all the riders were free and there was no wife mother along to tell them they'd had enough rides, or that they'd better be going if they wanted to get home by dark? Or was it some far-homewreop bar where the drinking never stopped and the batwings were always propped open and all the old companions were gathered around the electronic hockey game, glasses in hand. A Shockley prominent among them with his tie loosened and the top button of his shirt undone? A place where both she and Danny were excluded and the boogie went on endlessly?

Wendy was worried about him, the old, helpless worry that she had hoped was behind her forever in Vermont, as if worry could somehow not cross state lines. She didn't like what the Overlook seemed to be doing to Jack and Danny.

The most frightening thing, vaporous and unmentioned, perhaps unmentionable, was that all of Jack's drinking symptoms had come back, one by one, all but the drink itself. The constant wiping of the lips with hand or handkerchief, as if to rid them of

extra minutes. Long pauses as the typewriter more fully expressed what he was to ask. There had been a horrible scene in the crypts the night after Al had ended his business with the goss. He had been chewing them again. He promised to see the goss. He would unconsciously start snapping his fingers in a nervous rhythm when things got a little out of control. She had begun to worry about his temper, too. It would seem to come as a relief if he would lose it, but would seem in much the same way that he went down to the basement first thing in the morning and last thing at night to dump the press in the boiler. It would be good to see him curse and kick a chair across the room or slam a door. But those things, always an integral part of his temperament, had almost wholly ceased. Yet she had been hearing that Jack was more and more often angry with her or Danny but was refusing to let it out. The boiler had a pressure gauge, although cluttered with grease, but so far work here Jack had none. She had never been able to read him very well. Danny could but Danny wasn't talking.

And the call from Al. At about the same time it had come. Danny had lost all interest in the story they had been reading. He left her to sit by the fire and crossed to the main desk where Jack had constructed a roadway for his machine cars and trucks. The Violent Violet Volkswagen was there and Danny had begun to push it rapidly back and forth. Pretending to read her own book but actually looking at Danny over the top of it, she had seen an odd amalgam of the ways she and Jack expressed anxiety. The wringing of the lips. Running both hands nervously through his hair, as she had done while waiting for Jack to come home from his round at the bars. She could not believe Al had called us to ask how things were going. If you wanted to shoot the bull, you called Al. When Al called you, that was business.

Later, when she had come back downstairs, she had found Danny curled up by the fire again, reading the second-grade primer adventures of Joe and Rachel at the circus with their dad as in complete, absorbed attention. The fidgety distraction had completely disappeared. Watching him, she had been struck again by the eerie certainty that Danny knew more and understood more than there was room for in Dr. ("Just call me B. I.") Edmonds's philosophy.

"Hey, time for bed, doc," she'd said

"Yeah, okay." He marked his place in the book and stood up

"Wash up and brush your teeth."

"Okay."

"Don't forget to use the floss."

"I won't."

They stood side by side for a moment, watching the wax and wane of the coals of the fire. Most of the lobby was chilly and drafty, but this circle around the fireplace was magically warm and hard to leave.

"It was Uncle Al on the phone," she said casually

"Oh yeah?" Totally unsurprised

"I wonder if Uncle Al was mad at Danny," she said still casually

"Yeah, he sure was." Danny said still watching the fire. "He didn't want Daddy to write the book."

"What book, Danny?"

"About the hotel."

The question framed on her lips was one she and Jack had asked Danny a thousand times. *How do you know that?* she hadn't asked him. She didn't want to upset him before bed, or make him aware that they were casually discussing his knowledge of things he had no way of knowing at all. And he *did* know, she was convinced of that. Dr. Edmonds's patter about inductive reasoning and subconscious logic was just that, patter. Her sister

how had Danny know she was thinking about Aileen in the waiting room that day? And

(I dreamed Daddy had an accident.)

She shook her head, as if to clear it. "Go wash up, doc."

"Okay." He ran up the stairs toward their quarters. Frowning, she had gone into the kitchen to warm Jack's milk in a saucepan.

And now, lying wakeful in her bed and listening to her husband's breathing and the wind outside (miraculously, they'd had only another flurry that afternoon, still no heavy snow) she let her mind turn fully to her lovely, troubling son, born with a caul over his face, a simple tissue of membrane that doctors saw perhaps once in every seven hundred births, a tissue that the old wives' tales said betokened the second sight.

She decided that it was time to talk to Danny about the Over-

look — and by nine she tried to get Danny to talk to her. Tomorrow. For sure. The two of them would be going down to the Seward Public Library to see if they could get him some second-grade level books on an extended loan through the werner, and she would talk to him. And frankly, With that thought she felt a little easier, and at last began to drift toward sleep.

* * *

Danny lay awake in his bedroom, eyes open, left arm encircling his aged and slightly worse-for-wear Pooh. Pooh had just one shoe-button eye and was oozing stuffing from half a dozen sprung seams, listening to his parents sleep in their bedroom. He felt as if he were standing unswerving guard over them. The nights were the worst of all. He hated the nights and he constantly howled of the wind around the west side of the hotel.

His glider floated overhead from a string. On his bureau, the VW model, brought up from the roadway setup downstairs, glowed a dimmy fluorescent purple. His books were in the bookcase, his coloring books on the desk. *A place for everything and everything in its place.* Mommy said. *Then you know where it is when you want it.* But now things had been misplaced. Things were missing. Worse still, things had been *added*, things you couldn't quite see. Like in one of those pictures that said *CAN YOU SEE THE INDIANS?* And if you strained and squinted you could see some of them. The thing you had taken for a canvas at first glance was really a brave with a knife clamped in his teeth and there were others hiding in the rocks, and you could even see one of their evil, merciless faces peering through the spokes of a covered wagon wheel. But you could never see all of them, and that was what made you uneasy. Because it was the ones you couldn't see that would sneak up behind you, a tomahawk in one hand and a scalping knife in the other.

He shifted around in his bed, his eyes searching for the comforting glow of the night light. Things were worse here. He knew that much for sure. At first they hadn't been so bad, but then by nine — his daddy thought about drinking a lot more. Sometimes he was angry at Mommy and didn't know why. He went up and wiping his lips with his handkerchief and all his eyes were far away and cloudy. Mommy was worried about him and Danny — oh. He

didn't have to shine into her to know that it had been in the anxious way she had questioned him on the day the fire hose had seemed to turn into a snake. Mr. Halorann said he thought all mothers could shine a little bit, and she had known on that day that something had happened. But not what.

He had almost told her, but a couple of things had held him back. He knew that the doctor in Sedwinder had dismissed Tony and the things that Tony showed him as perfectly

(well almost)

normal. His mother might not believe him if he told her about the house. Worse, she might believe him in the wrong way, might think he was LOSING HIS MARBLES. He understood a little about LOSING YOUR MARBLES, not as much as he did about GETTING A BABY, which his mommy had explained to him the year before at some length, but enough.

Once at nursery school, his friend Scott had pointed out a boy named Robin Stengler who was moping around the swings with a face almost long enough to sleep in. Robin's father taught arithmetic at Daddy's school, and Scott's daddy taught history there. Most of the kids at the nursery school were associated either with Scott or with Prepper with the small IBM plant just outside of town. The other kids, the home-town ones grown the IBM kids in another. There were cross-friendships, of course, but it was natural enough for the kids whose fathers knew each other to more or less stick together. When there was an adult scandal in one group, it almost always filtered down to the children in some way or mixed form or rather, but it rarely jumped to the other group.

He and Scott were sitting in the playhouse when Scott jerked his thumb at Robin and said, "You know that kid?"

"Yeah," Danny said.

Scott leaned forward. "His dad lost his marbles last night. They took him away."

"Yeah. Just for losing some marbles?"

Scott looked disgusted. He went on to say, "You know, Scott counted his eyes. Flipped out, so long it had to wait for his eyelids to get large enough to go around his ears. They took him to THE BUGHOUSE."

"Wow!" Danny said. "When will they let him come back?"

"Never never never," Scott said. "Okay."

In the course of that day and the next Danny heard that
 a) Mr. Stenger had tried to kill everybody in his family, including Robin, with his World War II souvenir pistol

b) Mr. Stenger ripped the house to pieces while he was drunk

c) Mr. Stenger had been discovered eating a bowl of dead bugs and grass and they were cereal and milk and crying while he did it.

d) Mr. Stenger had tried to strangle his wife with a stocking when the Red Sox lost a big ball game

Finally, too, refused to keep it to himself, he had asked Danny about Mr. Stenger. His daddy had taken him on his lap and had explained that Mr. Stenger had been under a great deal of strain, some of it about his family and some about his job and some of it about things that nobody but doctors could understand. He had been having crying fits, and three nights ago he had gotten crying and couldn't stop it and had broken a lot of things in the Stenger home. It wasn't LOSING YOUR MARBLES. Daddy said, I WAS HAVING A BREAKDOWN and Mr. Stenger was in a BUC HOUSE but it's a SAKNY TAKIN'. But despite Daddy's careful explanations, Danny was scared. There didn't seem to be any difference at all between LOSING YOUR MARBLES and HAVING A BREAKDOWN and whether you lived in a BUC HOUSE or a SAKNY TAKIN' there were still bars on the windows and they would get at you even if you wanted to go. And his father quite innocently had confirmed another of Scotty's phrases and added one that added Danny with a vague and unformed dread. In the place where Mr. Stenger now lived, there were THE MEN IN THE WHITE COATS. They came to get you in a truck with no windows, a truck that was gravestone grey. It rolled up to the curb in front of your house and THE MEN IN THE WHITE COATS got out and took you away from your family and made you live in a room with Scotty was. And if you wanted to write home you had to do it with Crayons.

When would they all come back? Danny asked his father.
 "Just as soon as he's better, doc."

"But when will that be?" Danny asked again.

Dad, Jack said, NO ONE KNOWS.

And that was the worst of all. It was another way of saying never never never. A month later Robin's mother took him to

of nursery school and they moved away from Springton without Mr Stenger.

That had been over a year ago. After Daddy stopped taking the Bad Stuff but before he had lost his mind Danny still thought about it often. Sometimes when he fed down or bumped his head or had a headache he would begin to cry and the memory would flash over him accompanied by the fear that he would not be able to stop crying, that he would just go on and on weeping and wailing until his daddy went to the phone, dialed 1 and said "Hello. This is Jack Torrance a 149 Maple Lane Way. My son here can't stop crying. Please send THE MEN IN THE WHITE COATS to take him to the SANNY PARLOR. That's right, he's lost his MABLES. Thank you." And the gray truck with no windows would come rolling up to his door. They would load him in, screaming hysterically, and take him away. When would he see his mommy and daddy again? NO ONE KNOWS.

It was this fear that had kept him silent. A year earlier he was quite sure that his daddy and mommy wouldn't let him be taken away for thinking a fire hose was a snake. His rational mind was sure of that but still when he thought of telling them the old memory rose up like a stone blocking his mouth and blocking words. It was like Tony. Tony had always seemed perfectly normal until he had dreams, of course, and his parents had accepted Tony as a more or less normal phenomenon. Things like Tony came from being BRIGHT which they believed. He was the same way, they believed they were BRIGHT but a fire hose. But then a snake or seeing blood and brains on the wall of the Bedroom. Sweet when no one else could those things would not be normal. They had already seen him see a regular doctor. Was it not reasonable to assume that the MEN IN THE WHITE COATS might come next?

Still he might have told them except he was the father or father but they would want to take him away from him. And he wanted desperately to get away from the Overlook. But he knew that was his father's last chance that he was here at the Overlook to make the care of the place. It was his duty to work on his papers. To get over his unhappiness. To be a Man. To be a Man. And then very recently it had seemed that

things were happening. It was only lately that Daddy had begun to have trouble. Since he found those papers.

This inhuman place makes human monsters.)

What did that mean? He had prayed to God, but God hadn't told him. And what would Daddy do if he stopped working here? He had tried to find out from Daddy's mind, and had become more and more convinced that Daddy didn't know. The strongest proof was coming earlier this evening when Uncle A. had called his daddy up on the phone and said mean things and Daddy didn't dare say anything back because Uncle A. could fire him from his job just the way that Mr. Crombert, the Stovington headmaster, and the Board of Directors had fired him from his school-employment job. And Daddy was scared to death of that for him and Mommy as well as himself.

So he didn't dare say anything. He could only watch helplessly and hope that there really weren't any Indians at all, or if there were that they would be content to war for a deer game and let the rest of the three-wagon train pass unmolested.

But he couldn't believe it no matter how hard he tried.

Things were worse at the Overlook now.

The snow was coming, and when it did, any other people he had would be brought. And after the snow, what? What then, when they were all in place at the mercy of whatever might have been toying with them before?

Come on, here and take your medicine.)

What then? REDRUM.

He shivered in his bed and turned over again. He could read no more now. Tomorrow maybe he would try to do it. Tomorrow he would try to make Tony show him exactly what REDRUM was and if there was any way he could prevent it. He would make his nightmares. He had to know.

Danny was still awake long after his parents' false sleep had come, he realized. He rolled on his belly, a long, thin sheet slipping with a pop down years long, and then away in the dark, like a single seed in a pocket. And sometime after midnight, he slept fitfully and then on the floor, with his face pressed to the hard floor, having no sign of sleep, though gentle gaze of moonlight.

IN THE TRUCK

I see a bad moon-a-rising,
 I see trouble on the way
 I see earthquakes and lightnin'
 I see bad times today.
 Don't go 'round tonight,
 It's bound to take your life,
 There's a bad moon on the rise *

Someone had added a very old Buick car radio under the hotel truck's dashboard, and now, tinny and choked with static, the distinctive sound of John Fogerty's Creedence Clearwater Revival band came out of the speaker. Wendy and Danny were on their way down to Sidewinder. The day was clear and bright. Danny was turning Jack's orange library card over and over in his hands and seemed cheerful enough, but Wendy thought he looked drawn and tired, as if he hadn't been sleeping enough and was going on nervous energy alone.

The song ended and the disc jockey came on. "Yeah, that's Creedence. And speaking of bad moon, it looks like it may be rain over the KMTX listening area before long. Hard as it is to believe with the beautiful spring-like weather we've enjoyed for the last couple of free days. The KMTX Fearless Forecaster says high pressure will give way by one o'clock this afternoon to a widespread low-pressure area which is just gonna gonna to a stop in our KMTX area, up where the air is rare. Temperatures will fall rapidly and precipitation should start around dusk. Evaluations under seven inches and ice including the metro-Denver area can expect a mixture of sleet and snow, perhaps freezing on some roads, and not much snow in here either. We're looking at one to three inches

* The Moon Rising by J. C. Fogerty. 969 London Mills, Berkeley, California. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Information copyright secured.

below seven thousand and possible accumulations of six to ten inches in Central Colorado and on the Slope. The Highway Advisory Board says that if you're planning to tour the mountains in your car this afternoon or tonight, you should remember that the chain law will be in effect. And don't go nowhere unless you have to. Remember," the announcer addedocularly, "that's how the Donners got into trouble. They just weren't as close to the nearest Seven-Eleven as they thought."

A Clarrol commercial came on, and Wendy reached down and snapped the radio off. "You mind?"

"Hub-uh. That's okay." He glanced out at the sky, which was bright blue. "Guess Daddy picked just the right day to trim those hedge animals, didn't he?"

"I guess he did," Wendy said.

"Sure doesn't look much like snow, though," Danny added hopefully.

"Getting cold feet?" Wendy asked. She was still thinking about that crack the disc jockey had made about the Dinner Party.

"Nah, I guess not."

Well, she thought, this is the time. If you're going to bring it up, do it now or forever hold your peace.

"Danny," she said, making her voice as casual as possible, "would you be happier if we went away from the Overlook? If we didn't stay the winter?"

Danny looked down at his pants. "I guess so," he said. "Yeah. But it's Daddy's job."

"Some mes," she said carefully. "I got the idea that Daddy might be happier away from the Overlook, too." They passed a sign which read SLOWWINDR 15 M. and then she took the truck cautiously around a hairpin and shifted up in a second. She took her chances on these downgrades, they could hurt only.

"Do you really think so?" Danny asked. He looked at her when in crest for a moment and then shook his head. "No, do I think so?"

"Why not?"

"Because he's worried about us," Danny said, choosing his words carefully. It was hard to explain the reasons and so he said of himself. He found himself talking back to a man he didn't like, to a Mr. H. who had about the big kid looking at department store

TV sets and wanting to steal one. That had been distressing, but at least it had been clear what was going on, even to Danny, then little more than an infant. But grownups were always in a turmoil every possible action muddled over by thoughts of the consequences, by self-doubt, by *self-savage*, by feelings of love and responsibility. Every possible choice seemed to have drawbacks, and sometimes he didn't understand why the drawbacks were drawbacks. It was very hard.

"He thinks . . ." Danny began again, and then looked at his mother quickly. She was watching the road, not looking at him, and he felt he could go on.

"He thinks maybe we'll be lonely. And then he thinks that he likes it here and it's a good place for us. He loves us and doesn't want us to be lonely . . . or sad . . . but he thinks even if we are, it might be okay in the LONGRUN. Do you know LONGRUN?"

She nodded, "Yes, dear. I do."

"He's worried that if we left he couldn't get another job. That we'd have to beg, or something."

"Is that a lot?"

"No, but the rest is a bit mixed up. Because he's different now."

"Yes," she said, almost sighing. The grade eased a little and she shifted cautiously back to third gear.

"I'm not making his up. Mommy. Honest to God."

"I know that," she said, and smiled. "Did Tony tell you?"

"No," he said. "I just know. That doctor didn't believe in Tony, did he?"

"Never mind that doctor," she said. "I believe in Tony. I don't know what he is or who he is, if he's a part of you. That's special or if he comes from somewhere outside. But I do believe in him, Danny. And if you . . . he . . . think we should go, we will. The two of us will go and he'll be here with Daddy again in the spring."

He looked at her with sharp hope. "Where? A motel?"

"Hoo, we couldn't afford a motel. I would have to be at my mother's."

The hope in Danny's face died out. "I know," he said, and stopped.

"What?"

"Nothing," he muttered.

She shrank back to see what as the pride returned again. "No, don't please don't say that. This talk is something we should have had weeks ago, I think. So please. What's it you know? I won't be mad. I can't be mad because this is too important. Talk straight to me."

"I know how you feel about her," Danny said, and sighed. "How do I feel?"

"Bad." Danny said, and then rhyming, singsong, frightened her. "Bad! Sad! Mad! I know she wasn't your mommy at all. Like she wanted to eat you." He looked at her, frightened. "And I don't like it there. She's always thinking about how she would be better for me than you. And how she could get me away from you. Mommy, I don't want to go there. I'd rather be in the Overlook than there."

Wendy was shaken. Was it that bad between her and her mother? God, what hell for the boy and what was and he could really read their thoughts for each other. She suddenly felt more naked than naked, as if she had been caught in an obscene act.

"Alright," she said. "Alright, Danny."

"You're mad at me," he said in a small, near-to-ears voice.

"No, I'm not. Really I'm not. I'm just sort of shook up." They were passing a SIDEWINDER 15 MI. sign, and Wendy relaxed a little. From here on in, the road was better.

"I want to ask you one more question," Danny. "I want you to answer it as truthfully as you can. Will you do that?"

"Yes, Mommy," he said, almost whispering.

"Has your daddy been drinking again?"

No," he said, and smothered the two words that rose behind his lips after that simple negative. *Not yet.*

Wendy relaxed a little more. She put a hand on Danny's jeans-clad leg and squeezed it. "Your daddy has tried very hard," she said softly. "Because he loves us. And we love him don't we?"

He nodded gravely.

Speaking almost to herself she went on. "He's not a perfect man, but he has tried. Danny, he's tried so hard." When he stopped, he went through a kind of hell. He's still going through it. I think if it hadn't been for us, he would have just let go. I want to do what's right. And I don't know. Should we go? Stay? It's like a choice between the fat and the fire."

"I know."

"Would you do something for me, doc?"

"What?"

"Try to make Tony come. Right now. Ask him if we're safe at the Overlook."

"I already tried," Danny said slowly. "This morning."

"What happened?" Wendy asked. "What did he say?"

"He didn't come," Danny said. "Tony didn't come." And he suddenly burst into tears.

"Danny," she said, a-timed. "Honey, don't do that. Please." The truck swerved across the double yellow line and she pulled it back, scared.

"Don't take me to Grandma's," Danny said through his tears. "Please. Mommy, I don't want to go there, I want to stay with Daddy—"

"All right," she said softly. "All right, that's what we'll do." She took a Kleenex out of the pocket of her Western-style skirt and handed it to him. "We'll stay. And everything will be fine. Just fine."

23

IN THE PLAYGROUND

Jack came out onto the porch, tugging the tab of his zipper up under his chin, blinking into the bright air. In his left hand he was holding a battery-powered hedge-clipper. He tugged a fresh handkerchief out of his back pocket with his right hand, wiped his lips with it, and tucked it away. Snow, they had said on the radio. It was hard to believe, even though he could see the clouds building up on the far horizon.

He started down the path to the topiary, switching the hedge-clipper over to the other hand. It wouldn't be a long job, he thought, a little touch-up would do it. The cold nights had surely stunted their growth. The rabbit's ears looked a little fuzzy, and two of the dog's legs had grown fuzzy green bonespurs, but the

the end of the buffalo lunge, for Jack didn't know how to do the trick, and then let the snow come.

The concrete path ended as abruptly as a diving board. It stopped off it and walked past the drained pool, the gravel path which wound through the hedge sculptures, and at last he picked up the hose. He walked over to the right and pushed the handle of the clippers. It hummed not quite like

the Brier Rabbit. Jack said, "How are you today? A little bit tired up and get some of the extra off your ears? Fine. Say, did you hear the one about the traveling salesman and the lady with a pet poodle?"

His voice sounded unnatural and stupid in his ears, and he stopped. It occurred to him that he didn't care much for these voice animals. It had always seemed slightly perverted to him to clip and torture a plain old hedge or something that it wasn't. Along one of the highways in Vermont there had been a huge billboard on a high slope overlooking the road, advertising some kind of ice cream. Making ice-cream poodle ice cream. That was a little wrong. It was grotesque.

(You weren't hard to please, were you, Torrance?)

Ah, that was true. So true. He clipped along the rabbit's ears, brushing a small fiber of sticks and twigs off onto the grass. The hedge-clipper hummed in that low and rather disgusting mechanical way that all battery-powered appliances seem to have. The sun was brilliant but it held no warmth, and now it wasn't so hard to believe that snow was coming.

Working quickly, knowing that to stop and think when you were at this kind of task usually meant making a mistake, Jack touched up the rabbit's "face" (up this close it didn't look like a face at all, but he knew that at a distance of twenty paces or so light and shadow would seem to suggest one, that, and the viewer's imagination) and then zipped the clippers along its belly.

That done, he shut the clippers off, walked down toward the playground, and then turned back abruptly to get it all at once the entire rabbit. Yes, it looked all right. Well, he would clip the dog next.

"But if it was my hotel," he said. "I'd cut the whole damn bunch of you down." He would, too. Jack cut them down and resodded the lawn where they'd been and put in half a dozen small

wasn't it? The way it felt. People could have cock-
s on the tree-trunks down in the summer sun. Some got lizards
and margaritas and pink clothes and all those sweet things and kids.
A rum and coke maybe. Jack took his handkerchief out of his
back pocket and slowly rubbed his lips with it.

Come on, come on, he said softly. That was nothing but he
thinking about

He was going to start back and then some impulse made him
change his mind and he went down to the playground instead. It
was funny how you never knew kids, he thought. He and Wendy
had expected Danny would love the playground, it had everything
a kid could want. But Jack didn't think the boy had been down
here a dozen times, if that. He supposed if there had been a girl
to play with it would have been different.

The gate squeaked slightly as he let himself in and down the
was crushed gravel crunching under his feet. He went first to the
playhouse, the perfect scene made of the Overlook. Next it came
up to his shoulder height, just about Danny's height when he was
standing up. Jack looked red down and looked in the three little
windows.

The girl has come to eat you all up in your beds," he said
half-aloud. Kiss your Trip. A rating problem. But that wasn't
funny, either. You could open the house simply by pulling it apart
or opened on a hidden hinge. The inside was a disappointment.
The walls were painted but the place was mostly hollow. Of
course it would have to be, he told himself, or how else could the
kids get inside? What play furniture might go with the place in the
summer was gone, probably picked away in the equipment shed.
He closed it up and heard the small click as the latch closed.

He walked over to the stile, set the huge copper down and
after a glance back at the driveway to make sure Wendy and
Danny hadn't followed he climbed to the top and sat down. This
was the way kids came but the few seconds of uncomfortable light for
his grown-up ass. How long had it been since he had been on a
slide? Twenty years? I don't seem possible, he told he that, saying
I don't feel that young but it had to be that or more. He could
remember his old man taking him to the park in Berlin when he
had been Danny's age and he had done the whole business of
swings, teeter, others everything. He and the old man would have

a handgunch and buy pigeons from the man with the cart if it would. They would sit on a bench to get them and dozens of pairs of pigeons would flick around their feet.

"Come and see venger birds," his dad would say, "don't you and them, Jacky." But they would both end up catching them, one giggling all the way they ran after the birds, the greedy way they ran after the birds. Jack didn't think the old man had ever taken his brothers to the park. Jack had been his favorite, and even so Jack had taken his bumps when the old man was drunk, which was a lot of the time. But Jack had loved him for as long as he was alive, long after the rest of the family could only hate and fear him.

He pushed off with his hands and went to the horizon, but the trip was unsatisfying. The slide unused, had too much friction and no really pleasant speed could be built up. And his ass was just too big. His adult feet thumped onto the slight dip where thousands of children's feet had landed before him. He stood up, brushed at the seat of his pants, and looked at the hedge-climber. But instead of going back to it he went to the swings, which were also a disappointment. The chains had built up rust since the close of the season, and they squeaked like things in pain. Jack promised himself he would oil them in the spring.

You better stop it, he advised himself. You're not a kid anymore. You don't need his place to prove it.

But he went on to the cement rings. They were an insult for him and he passed them up—and then to the security fence which marked the edge of the grounds. He curved his fingers through the links and looked through the sun crosshatching shadow-lines his face like a man behind bars. He recognized the similarity to himself and he shook the chain link, put a harried expression on his face, and whispered, "Lemme outta here. Lemme outta here." But for the third time, not funny. It was time to go back to work.

That was when he heard the sound behind him.

He turned around quickly, frowning, embarrassed, wondering if someone had seen him frowning around down here in middle country. His eyes flicked off the slides, the opposing angles of the seesaws, the swings in which only the wind sat. Beyond all that to the gate and the low fence that divided the playground from the lawn and the topiary—the bushes gathered protectively around the

path, the rabbit bent over as if to crop grass, the buffalo ready to charge, the crouching dog. Beyond them, the putting green and the hotel itself. From here he could even see the raised up of the square court on the Overlook's western side.

Everything was just as it had been. So why had the flesh of his face and hands begun to creep, and why had the hair along the back of his neck begun to stand up, as if the flesh back there had suddenly tightened?

He squinted up at the hotel again, but that was no answer. It simply stood there, its windows dark, a tiny thread of smoke curling from the chimney, coming from the banked fire in the lobby.

(Buster, you better get going or they're going to come back and wonder if you were doing anything all the while.)

Sure, get going. Because the snow was coming and he had to get the damn hedges trimmed. It was part of the agreement. Besides, they wouldn't dare—

(Who wouldn't? What wouldn't? Dare do what?)

He began to walk back toward the hedge-clipper at the foot of the big kids' slide, and the sound of his feet crunching on the crushed stone seemed abnormal & loud. Now the flesh on his testes had begun to creep too, and his buttocks felt hard and heavy, like stone.

(Jesus, what is this?)

He stopped by the hedge-clipper but made no move to pick it up. Yes, there was something different. In the top ary. And it was so simple, so easy to see that he just wasn't picking it up. Come on, he scolded himself, you just trimmed the fucking rabbit, so what's the

(that's it)

His breath stopped in his throat.

The rabbit was down on all fours, cropping grass. Its belly was against the ground. But not ten minutes ago it had been up on its hind legs, of course it had been, he had trimmed its ears—and its belly.

His eyes darted to the dog. When he had come down the path it had been sitting up, as if begging for a sweet. Now it was crouched, head nled, the cupped wedge of mouth seeming to snarl silently. And the lions—

(oh no, baby, oh no, ah-uh, no way)

the lions were closer to the path. The two on his right had subtly changed positions, had drawn closer together. The rest of the one on the left now almost jutted out over the path. When he had come past them and through the gate, that lion had been on the right and he was quite sure its tail had been curled around it.

They were no longer protecting the path; they were blocking it.

Jack put his hand suddenly over his eyes and then took it away. The picture didn't change. A soft sigh, too quiet for him, a groan escaped him. In his drinking days he had always been afraid of something like this happening. But when you were a heavy drinker you called it the DTs—good old Ray M. and on *Le Weekend* seeing the bugs coming out of the walls.

What did you call it when you were cold sober?

The question was meant to be rhetorical, but he must answer it.

(you call it insanity)

nevertheless.

Staring at the hedge a male lion realized something *had* changed while he had his hand over his eyes. The dog had moved closer. No longer crouching, it seemed to be in a running posture, haunches flexed, one front leg forward, the other back. The hedge mouth yawned wider, the pruned sucks looked sharp and vicious. And now he fancied he could see faint eye indentations in the greenery as well. Looking again.

Why do they have to be trimmed? he thought hysterically. *They're perfect.*

Another soft sound. He involuntarily backed up a step when he looked at the lions. One of the two on the right seemed to have drawn slightly ahead of the other. Its head was lowered. One paw had stooped almost all the way to the low fence. Dear God, what next?

(next it leaps over and gobbies you up like something in an evil nursery fable)

It was like that game they had played when they were kids, red light. One person was "it," and while he turned his back and counted to ten, the other players crept forward. When "it" got to ten, he whirled around and if he caught anyone moving, they were out of the game. The others remained frozen in static postures

until he turned his back and came on again. They got closer and closer and at last, somewhere between five and ten, you would feel a hand on your back . . .

Gravel rattled on the path

He jerked his head round to look at the dog and it was half-way down the pathway just behind him. His jaws were as much wide and yawning. Before it had only been a henge clipped in the general shape of a dog, something that lost all definition when you got up close to it. But now Jack could see that it had been clipped to look like a German shepherd, and shepherds can be mean. You could train shepherds to kill.

A low rumbling sound.

The lion on the left had advanced all the way to the fence now, its muzzle was touching the hoaruse. It seemed to be grunting at him. Jack backed up another two steps. His head was thudding crazy and he could feel the dry rasp of his breath in his throat. Now the buffalo had moved, creaking to the right, behind and around the rabbit. The head was lowered, the green hedge horns pointing at him. The tongue was, you couldn't watch all of them. Not all at once.

He began to make a whining sound, unaware in his locked concentration that he was making any sound at all. His eyes darted from one hedge creature to the next, trying to see them move. The wind gusted, making a hungry rattling sound in the close-packed branches. What kind of sound would there be if they got him? But of course he knew. A snapping, rending, breaking sound. It would be—

(no no NO NO I WILL NOT BELIEVE THIS NOT AT ALL!)

He clapped his hands over his eyes, clutching at his hair, his forehead, his throbbing temples. And he stood like that for a long time, dread building until he could stand it no longer and he pulled his hands away with a cry.

By the putting green the dog was sitting up as if begging for a scrap. The buffalo was gazing with disinterest back toward the rogue court, as it had been when Jack had come down with the clippers. The rabbit stood on its hind legs, ears up to catch the faintest sound, freshly clipped belly exposed. The lions, rooted into place, stood beside the path.

He stood frozen for a long time, the harsh breath in his throat finally slowing. He reached for his cigarettes and shook four of them out onto the gravel. He stooped down and picked them up, groped for them, never taking his eyes from the topiary for fear the animals would begin to move again. He picked them up, stuffed three carelessly back into the pack, and lit the fourth. After two deep drags he dropped it and crushed it out. He went to the hedge-cutter and picked it up.

"I'm very tired," he said, and now it seemed okay to talk out loud. I didn't seem crazy at all. I've been under a strain. The wasps . . . the play . . . A calling me like that. But it's all right."

He began to lurch back up to the hotel. Part of his mind tugged fretfully at him, tried to make him detour around the hedge animals, but he went directly up the gravel path, brought them. A faint breeze ratted through them, that was all. He had imagined the whole thing. He had had a bad scare but it was over now.

In the Overlook's kitchen he paused to take two Excedrin and then went downstairs and looked at papers until he heard the rum sound of the hotel truck rattling into the driveway. He went up to greet them. He felt all right. He saw no need to mention his hallucination. He'd had a bad scare but it was over now.

24

SNOW

It was dusk.

They stood on the porch in the falling light, Jack in the middle, his left arm around Danny's shoulders and his right arm around Wendy's waist. Together they watched as the decision was taken out of their hands.

The sky had been completely clouded over by two thirty and it had begun to snow an hour later, and this time you didn't need a weatherman to tell you it was serious snow, no flurry. That was going to melt or blow away when the evening wind started to whoop. At first it had fallen in perfectly straight lines, sliding up

a snowcover that coated everything evenly. But now, an hour after it had started, the wind had begun to blow from the northwest and the snow had begun to drift against the porch and the sides of the Overlook's driveway. Beyond the grounds the highway had disappeared under an even blanket of white. The hedge animals were also gone, but when Wendy and Danny had gotten home, she had commended him on the good job he had done. Do you think so? he had asked, and said no more. Now the hedges were buried under amorphous white cloaks.

Curiously, all of them were thinking different thoughts but feeling the same emotion: relief. The bridge had been crossed.

"What if ever be spring?" Wendy murmured.

Jack squeezed her tighter. Before you know it. What do you say we go in and have some supper? It's cold out here."

She smiled. All afternoon Jack had seemed distant and worried. Now he sounded more like his normal self. Fine by me. How about you, Danny?"

"Sure."

So they went in together, leaving the wind to build to the low-pitched scream that would go on all night—a sound they would get to know well. Flakes of snow swirled and danced across the porch. The Overlook faced it as it had for nearly three quarters of a century. Its darkened windows now bearded with snow, indifferent to the fact that it was now cut off from the world. Or possibly it was pleased with the prospect. Inside it she—the three of them—went about their early evening routine like microbes, rapped in the presence of a monster.

25

INSIDE 217

A week and a half later, two feet of snow lay white and crisp and even on the grounds of the Overlook Hotel. The hedge menagerie was buried up to its haunches. The rabbit frozen on its hind legs seemed to be rising from a white pool. Some of the drifts were

over five feet deep. The wind was constantly changing their sculpting them into sinuous, dune-like shapes. Twice Jack had snowed out clumsily around to the equipment shed for his shovel. To clear the porch, the third time he struggled, simply cleared a path through the towering drift lying against the door, and let Danny amuse himself by sledding to the right and left of the porch. The tray-borne drifts lay against the Overlook's west side; some of them towered to a height of twenty feet, and beyond them the ground was scoured bare to the grass by the constant wind. The first floor windows were covered, and the view from the dining room which Jack had so admired on a sunny day was now no more exciting than a view of a blank movie screen. Their phone had been out for the last eight days, and the CB radio in Leman's office was now their only communications link with the outside world.

I snowed every day now, sometimes only brief flurries that powdered the glittering snow crust, sometimes I tried the howl whistle of the wind cranking up to a woman's shriek that made the old hole creak and groan, a armng y even in its deep cradle of snow. Night temperatures had not gotten above 10°, and as much the thermometer by the kitchen service entrance sometimes got as high as 25° in the early afternoons, the steady knife-edge of the wind made it uncomfortable to go out without a ski mask. But they did go out on the days when the sun shone, usually wearing two sets of clothing and mittens on over their gloves. Getting out was almost a compulsory thing: the hotel was crisscrossed with the double track of Danny's Flexible Flyer. The permutations were nearly endless. Danny riding while his parents pushed. Danny riding and laughing while Wendy and Danny tried to pull it was just possible for them to pull him on the icy crust, and they stopped when powder covered it. Danny and Mom riding. Wendy riding by herself while her mother pushed and pulled white vapor like drybrushes, pretending she was heavier than he was. They laughed a great deal in these sed ex ante, and tried to be as loud as the whooping and impersonal voice of the wind, which, and he knew, sincere, made their laughter seem funny and forced.

They had seen caribou tracks in the snow, and once the children themselves, a group of five standing motionless below the security fence. They had all taken turns with Jack's Zeppelins and

lance to see him better and looking at them had given Wendy a weird, unreal feeling. They were standing leg-deep in the snow that covered the highway and it came to her that between now and the spring thaw the road belonged more to the caribou than it did to them. Now the things thatnier had made up for her were neutralized. The caribou understood that she believed. She had put the bivouacs down and had said something about starting lunch and in the kitchen she had cried a little, trying to rid herself of the awful penury feeling that sometimes fell on her like a large pressing hand over her heart. She thought of the caribou. She thought of the wasps Jack had put out on the service entrance platform, under the Pyrex bowl, to freeze.

There were plenty of snowshoes hung from nails in the equipment shed and Jack found a pair to fit each of them, although Danny's pair was quite a bit oversized. Jack did well with them. Although he had not snowshoed since his boyhood in Berlin, New Hampshire he retaught himself quickly. Wendy didn't care much for it—even fifteen minutes of tramping around on the oversized laced paddies made her legs and ankles ache outrageously—but Danny was intrigued and working hard to pick up the knack. He suffered often but Jack was pleased with his progress. He said that by February Danny would be skipping circles around both of them.



This day was overcast and by noon the sky had already begun to spit snow. The radio was promising another eight to twelve inches and clearing hopes as to precipitation that great god of Colorado skiers. Wendy, sitting in the bedroom and knitting a scarf, thought to herself that she knew exactly what the skiers could do with additional snow. She knew exactly where they could put it.

Jack was in the cellar. He had gone down to check the furnace and to let such checks had become a ritual with him since he snow had closed them in and after satisfying himself that everything was going well he had wandered through the arch, screwed the light bulb on, and had sealed himself in an old and obnoxious camp chair he had found. He was leafing through the old records and papers, occasionally wiping his mouth with his handkerchief as

he did so. Confinement had leached his skin of its autumn tan and as he sat hunched over the yellowed, crackling sheets, his reddish-blond hair tumbling untidily over his forehead, he looked slightly lunatic. He had found some odd things tucked in among the pillows, bits of fading receipts. Disquieting things. A bloody strip of shoring. A dismembered teddy bear that seemed to have been slashed to pieces. A crumpled sheet of violet ladies stationery, a ghos of perfume still clinging to it beneath the mask of age. A note began and left unfinished on faded blue ink. *"Dear St. Tomm. I can't think so well up here as I'd hoped, abut as I mean of course who else?" Ha. Ha. Things keep getting in the way. I've had strange dreams about things going bump in the night. Can you believe that and. That was all.* The note was dated June 27, 1934. He found a hand puppet that seemed to be either a witch or a warlock. . . something with long, etch and a pointy hat at any rate. It had been improbably tucked between a bundle of natural gas receipts and a bundle of receipts for Vichy water. And something that seemed to be a poem, scribbled on the back of a menu in dark pencil. *"Medoc are you here? I've been sleep-walking again, my dear. The plants are moving under the rug. No date on the menu, and no name on the poem. If it was a poem. Elusive but fascinating. It seemed to him that these things were like pieces in a jigsaw, things that would eventually fit together if he could find the right linking pieces. And so he kept thinking, jumping and wiring his lips every time the furnace roared, like he behind him.*

* * *

Darby was standing outside room 217 again.

The passkey was in his pocket. He was staring at the door with a kind of dragged avidity, and his upper body seemed to twitch and jiggle beneath his flannel shirt. He was humming softly and tunelessly.

He had not wanted to come here now after the fire loss. He was scared to come here. He was scared that he had taken the passkey again, disobeying his father.

He *had* wanted to come here. Compulsively.

(killed, he called, set fire to, brought him back.)

was like a constant flashlight in his brain, a kind of no-glass vision

song but would not be appeased. And hadn't Mr. H. Harran said, "I don't think there's anything here that can hurt you?"

(You promised.)

Promises were made to be broken.

He jumped at that. It was as if that thought had come from outside, insectile, buzzing, softly capering.

(Promises were made to be broken my dear recreation, to be broken splintered shattered hammered apart FORF.)

His nervous humming broke in on a low, long song: "Lou, Lou, skip to my Lou, skip to my Lou my dear recreation."

Hadn't Mr. Harran been right? Hadn't he been right in the end, in the way why he had kept silent and allowed the snow to close them in?

Just leave your eyes open, he's gone.

What he had seen in the Presale. Sweet had gone away. And the snake had only been a fire hose that had taken into the ray. Yes, even the blind in the Presale. Sweet had been harmless, something old, something that had happened long before he was born or even thought of, something that was done with like a movie that only he could see. There was nothing really nothing, in this hole that could hurt him, and if he had to prove that to himself by going into this room, shouldn't he do so?

"Lou, Lou, skip to my Lou, . . ."

(Carefully, he'd the company door redrum redrum, and so, now, he brought him back safe and sound, from the ice, from heat to ground he was safe and sound. He knew there were things.)

(There's the scary picture, the one that hurt him but if only good.)

(What the rest he would be getting, the one that a woman in a BLUEBEARD suit or a BLUEBEARD in a woman's dress.)

(Good was asked because our very kind, but cold, and it was the HALL of satisfaction that brought him.)

Up he had, treading softly over the blue and twisting angle carpet. He had stopped by the fire extinguisher, but for the brass rattle back in the frame, and then he had picked it repeatedly with his finger, heart thumping, whispering: "Come on and hurt me. Come on and hurt me, you cheap prick. Can't do it, can you? Hah? You're nothing but a cheap fire hose. Can't do nothing but be here. Come on, come on." He had fallen into the whorl of the

And nothing had happened. It was only a hose after all, only canvas and brass you could hack it to pieces and it would never complain, never twist and jerk and bleed green slime all over the blue carpet, because it was only a hose, not a nose and not a rose, not glass buttons or satin bows, not a snake in a sleepy doze . . . and he had hurried on, had hurried on because he was

("Late, I'm late," said the white rabbit.)

the white rabbit. Yes. Now there was a white rabbit out by the playground, once it had been green but now it was white, as if something had shocked it repeatedly on the snowy windy nights and turned it old . . .

Danny took the passkey from his pocket and slid it into the lock.

"Lou, Lou . . ."

(the white rabbit had been on its way to a croquet party to the Red Queen's croquet party storks for mallets hedgehogs for balls.)

He touched the key let his fingers wander over it. His head felt dry and sick. He turned the key and the cumbars clamped back smoothly.

(OFF WITH HIS HEAD OFF WITH HIS HEAD! OFF WITH HIS HEAD!)

(this game isn't croquet though the mallets are too short this game is)

(WHACK BOOM! Straight through the wicket.)

OFF WITH HIS HEAD! AAAAAAAD—

Danny pushed the door open. It swung smoothly, without a creak. He was standing just outside a large combination bed-sitting room, and a though the snow had not reached up this far the highest of his were still a foot below the second-floor windows—the room was dark because Daddy had closed all the shutters on the western exposure two weeks ago.

He stood in the doorway, fumbled to his right and found the switch plate. Two bulbs in an overhead cut glass fixture came on. Danny stepped farther in and looked around. The rug was deep and soft, a quiet rose color. Soothing. A table held with a white coverlet. A writing desk.

(Prove it, me. Why is a room like a writing desk?)

by the large shuttered window. During the season the Constant Writer.

(having a wonderful time, with you were fear)

would have a pretty view of the mountains to describe to the folks back home.

He stepped farther in. Nothing here, nothing at all. Only an empty room, or a hallway. Daddy was heating the east wing today. A bureau. A closet, its door open to reveal a catch of hotel hangers, the kind you can't steal. A Cider in Blue on an endtable. To his left was the bathroom door, a full-length mirror on it reflecting his own white-faced image. That door was ajar and

He watched his double nod slowly.

Yes, this is where it was, wherever it was. In there. In the bathroom. His double walked forward, as if to escape the glass. Then his hand out, pressed against his own. Then he fled away at an angle as the bathroom door swung open. He walked in.

A long room, or hallway, like a Pullman car. Jewels like hexagonal tiles on the floor. At the far end, a closet with the light up. At the right, a washbasin and another mirror above it, the kind that hides a medicine cabinet. To the left, a huge white claw-on clawfoot tub, its water curtain pulled closed. Denny stepped into the bathroom and walked toward the tub dreamily, as if propped from inside himself, as if the whole thing were one of the dreams Tony had brought him, that he would perhaps see something new when he pulled the shower curtain back, something Denny had forgotten or Mommy had lost, something that would make them both happy—

So he pulled the shower curtain back.

The woman in the tub had been dead for a long time. She was black and purple, her pinfixed body rising out of the green, green-tinted water like some fleshy island. Her eyes were fixed on Denny's glassy and huge like marbles. She was gripping her purple lips pulled back in a grimace. Her breasts leaked. Her penis protruded. Her hands were frozen on the knobby porcelain sides of the tub like crab claws.

Denny shrieked. But he couldn't ever escape his lips, moving away and inward, a falling in his darkness like a stone in a well. He took a single shuddering step backward, turning his back, cack on the white hexagonal tiles, and at the same moment, as time broke, springing off at a dizzy angle of his own.

The woman was sitting up.

She grinning, her huge marble eyes fixed on him, and was sitting on the floor. Her dark pupils were squinting down at the piece of . . . Her breasts swayed like ancient cracked parchment bags. There was the minute sound of breaking ice shards. She was not breathing. She was a corpse—and dead long years.

Danny turned and ran. Bearing through the bathroom door, his eyes staring from their sockets, his hair on end like the hair of a hedgehog about to be tormented by a saw blade.

(croquet? or roque?)

but his hand had been and sounded . . . He ran full tilt into the outside door of 247, which was now closed. He began hammering on it far behind realizing that it was unlocked, and he had only to turn the knob to let himself out. His mouth peeled forth deafening screams that were beyond human auditory range. He could only hammer on the door and hear the dead woman coming for him, bowed beneath dry hair, stretched hand, something that had withered that last fall for perhaps years, embalméd there, a magic.

The door would not open, would not would not would not.

And then the voice of Dick Hadley came to him, so sudden and unexpected, so calm, that his locked vocal cords opened and he began to cry weakly—not with fear but with blessed relief.

I don't think they can hurt you . . . they're like potatoes in a sack . . . close your eyes and he will be gone.

His eyes were snapped down. His hands curving inward. His shoulders hunched with the effort of his concentration.

(Nothing there nothing there not here at all NOTHING THERE THERE IS NOTHING.)

Time passed. And he was just beginning to relax, just beginning to realize that the door must be unlocked and he could go, when the years-damp, fishy, fish-spring hands closed sofly around his throat and he was turned impudently around to stare into the dead and purple face.

PART FOUR

Snowbound

DREAMLAND

Knitting made her sleepy. Today even Bartok would have made her sleepy and it wasn't Bartok. In the late afternoon it was Bach. Her hands grew slower and slower and at last she was asleep. Wasn't she making the acquaintance of Room 21's long-term resident? Wendy was asleep with her knitting on her lap. The yarn and needles rose in the slow time of her breathing. Her sleep was deep and she did not dream.

* * *

Jack Torrance had fallen asleep on his back. His sleep was good and uneasy, populated by dreams that seemed the very stuff of mere dreams—they were certainly more vivid than any dreams he had ever had before.

His eyes had begun to get heavy as he leafed through packets of index files, a hundred to a packet, seeming yfets of thousands all together. Yet he gave each one a cursory glance, a rapid skim, not being thorough or trying to miss exactly the piece of Overlook he needed to make the myth connected with that he was sure was here somewhere. He felt like a man with a power cord in one hand groping around a dark and unfamiliar room for a socket. If he could and if he would be rewarded with a view of wonders.

He had come to grips with A. Shockley's phone call and his request, his strange experience in the playground had helped him to do that. That had been too damned close to some kind of breakdown, and he was convinced that it was his mind revolting against A's high-goddamn-handed request that he chuck his book project. It had maybe been a sign that his own sense of self-respect could only be pushed so far before disintegrating entirely. He would write the book. If it meant the end of his association with A. Shockley, that would have to be. He would write the novel's biography, write it straight from the shoulder, and the introduction would be his hallucination that the literary animals had

ried. The tale would be ignored but workable. *Stronger than the Five* and *the Overlook Hotel* struck from beneath his door as he would not be written under any circumstances. He got back at Alvin Street University. George Hatfield, or his father, was not a reliable living duck that he had been for any one else for the matter. He would write it because the Overlook had encouraged him. And any other explanation he so simple or so true. He would write it for one reason he felt that all great literature is an and a fiction was written truth comes out in the end. It always comes out. He would write it because he felt he had to.

Five hundred goes whole milk. One hundred goes in a milk Pd. It's a fact. Five hundred goes orange juice Pd.

He stopped down further in his chair with his hand clutching the receipts, but his eyes no longer looking at what was printed there. They had come unfocused. His eyes were slow and heavy. He had sipped from the Overlook to his father, who had been a nurse at the Berlin Community Hospital. Big man. A fat man who had towered to six feet two inches, he had been taller than Jack even when Jack put his full growth. Six feet even, and that the old man had still been around then. "Runt of the litter," he would say, and then cuff Jack lovingly and laugh. There had been two other brothers, both taller than their father, and Becky, who at five ten had only been two inches shorter than Jack and shorter than he for most of their childhood.

His relationship with his father had been like the unfolding of some flower of beautiful potential, which, when wholly opened, revealed not to be buried inside. Until he had been seven he had seen the tall big bearded man uncritically and strongly in spite of the dark rings, the black and blues, the occasional black eye.

He could remember velvet summer nights, the house quiet, eldest brother Brett out with his girl, middle brother Mike studying something, Becky and their mother in the living room watching something on the bulky old TV, and he would sit on the floor dressed in a pajama singlet and nothing else, occasionally playing with his trucks, actually waiting for the moment when the silence would be broken by the door swinging open with a large bang, he knew of his father's welcome when he saw Jacky was waiting, his own happy squeal in answer as this big man came down the hall, his pink scalp glowing beneath his crewcut in the

grew a half inch. In a flash he was bucked like some soft and floppy oversized goose. His head and waist were shot a few inches back and some neck hair, the pants cuffs, crumpled down over the black shoes.

His father would sweep him into his arms and Jacky would be pummed determinedly upward so fast it seemed he could feel air pressure sealing against his skull like a cap made out of lead up around both of them crying "Ee-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-e" and there had been nights when his father in his drunkenness had not stopped the upward lift. But as he recoiled down again enough and Jacky had gone numb over his father's slumped head like a human projectile crash-landed on the hard floor behind his dad. But on other nights his father would only sweep him into a giggling ecstasy through the zone of air where heat hung around his father's face like a mass of round eyes. He twisted and turned and shaken like a laughing ring and finally to be set down on his feet tripping with reaction.

The receipts slipped from his relaxed hand and seesawed down through the air to land lazily on the floor. The excited wails to settle shut with his father's image tattooed on their backs like stereophonic images, opened a little bit and then slipped back down again. He twitched a little consciousness like the receipts, like a turnspit eaves, seesawed lazily downward.

That had been the first phase of his relationship with his father, and as it was drawing to its end he had become aware that Becky and his brothers and their older sister hated the father and that their mother, a nondescript woman who rarely spoke above a murmur, only suffered him because her Catholic upbringing said that she must. In those days it had not seemed strange to Jack that the father won all his arguments with his children by use of his fists, and it had not seemed strange that his own love should go hand in hand with his fear, fear of the elevator game which might end in a spinning crash on any given night, fear that his father's bearish good humor on his day off might suddenly change to boorish beating and the smack of his good right hand, and some times, he remembered, he had even been afraid that his father's shadow might fall over him while he was at play. It was near the end of this phase that he began to notice that Brett never brought his dates home, or Mike and Becky their chums.

Love began to curdle at nine, when his father put his mother

on the floor a winter cane. He had begun to carry the cane a year or so when a cold winter had left him lame. After that he was lame without coming and back and back and gold-headed. Now doing Jack's work, he had in a remembered clog at the sound of music in the air, a miraculous switch and as he switched again. Flash. He had heard their mother for no good reason at a subway and without warning. They had been at the supper table. The cane had been standing by his chair. It was a Sunday night, the end of a three-day weekend for Daddy, a weekend which he had hurried away from his usual comfortable state. Roast chicken. Peas. Mashed potatoes. Daddy at the head of the table, his place he pushed high, snoring, one eye closed. His mother passed plates. And suddenly Daddy had been wide awake, his eyes set deeply on her but ever so wide, looking with a kind of stupid, evil poignance. They flickered, and one member of the family at the next and the next in the corner of his forehead was standing, a prominence, a ways a bad sign. One of his large freckled hands had dropped to the gold knob of his cane, caressing it. He said something about coffee, that all was Jack was sure it had been coffee, that his father said Minna had served her mouth to answer and then the cane was whistling through the air, smashing against her face. It had spurred from her nose. Becky screamed. Minna's spectacles dropped into her glass. The cane had been drawn back, had come down again. It's time on top of her head, and the soup. Minna had dropped to the floor. He had been out of his chair and around to where she lay, dazed on the carpet, brandishing the cane, moving with a fat man's grotesque speed and agility, his eyes flashing, jaws quivering as he spoke to her just as he had always spoken to his children during such outbursts. Now. Now by Christ. I guess you'll take your medicine now, food and puppy. Whelp. Come on and take your medicine. The cane had gone up and down another seven more times before Brent and Max got him off him, dragged him away, washed the cane out of his hand. Jack.

(Little Jacky now he was a big Jacky now doing and mumping on a cubwehby camp chair while the furnace roared and he was safe behind him)

He knew exactly how many blows it had been because each soft whump against his mother's body had been engraved on his mem-

them to whatever might come. He had been killed in Dong Ho province in 1965 the year when Jack Torrance, undergraduate, had joined the active college agitation to end the war. He had waved his brother's bloody shirt at rallies that were increasingly well attended, but it was not Brett's face that hung before his eyes when he spoke—it was the face of his mother's, dazed, uncomprehending face, his mother saying "Who's got the newspaper?"

Mike escaped three years later when Jack was twelve—he went to UNH on a hefty Merit Scholarship. A year after that their father died of a sudden, massive stroke which occurred while he was prepping a patient for surgery. He had collapsed in his flapping and untucked hospital gown, dead possibly even before he hit the industrial black and red hospital tiles, and three days later the man who had dominated Jack's life, the irrational white ghost-god, was under ground.

The stone read *Mark Anthony Torrance, Loving Father*. To that Jack would have added one line: *He Knew How to Play Elevator*.

There had been a great lot of insurance money. There are people who collect insurance as compulsively as others collect coins and stamps, and Mark Torrance had been that type. The insurance money came in at the same time the monthly policy payments and liquor bill stopped. For five years they had been rich. Nearly rich . . .

In his shallow uneasy sleep his face rose before him as if in a glass, his face but not his face, the wide eyes and innocent bowed mouth of a boy sitting in the hall with his trucks, waiting for his daddy, waiting for the white ghost-god, waiting for the elevator to rise up with dizzying, exhilarating speed through the salt-and-sawdust mist of exhaled taverns, waiting perhaps for it to go crashing down, splinging old cocksprings out of his ears while his daddy raved with laughter, and it

transformed into Danny's face, so much like his own had been, his eyes had been light blue while Danny's were cloudy gray, but the misshapen nose and the complexion was fair, Danny in his study wearing training pants, all his papers soggy and the fine misty smell of beer rising—a breadful batter all in ferment, rising on the wings of yeast, the breath of taverns . . .

snap of bone his own voice, mewing drunkenly *Donny, mmm
okay, don't? On God oh God your poor sweet arm* and
(that face transformed into)

(mamma's dazed face rising up from below the table, punched
and bleeding, and mamma was saying)

*(from your father I repeat, an enormously important an-
nouncement from your father Please stay tuned or come immedi-
ately to the Happy Jack frequency Repeat, come immediately to
the Happy Hour frequency I repeat . . .)*

A slow dissolve. Dismembered voices echoing up to him as if
coming over endless, cloudy highway.

Things keep getting in the way, dear Tommy . . .

*Where are you here? I've been sleepwalking again, my dear
Lies the inhuman monsters that I fear . . .*

(Excuse me Mr. Loman but isn't this the . . .)

office with its file cabinets. Loman's big desk, a book res-
ervations book for next year already in place. Never misses a
tick that Loman, all the keys hanging neatly on their hooks

except for one, which one, which key, passkey—passkey, pass-
key, who's got the passkey? if we were lost, it's perhaps we'd see
and the big two-way radio in its shelf.

He snapped. On CB transmissions coming in short crackly
bursts. He switched the band and dialed across bursts of music,
news, a preacher haranguing a softly moaning congregation, a
weather report. And another voice which he dialed back to. It was
his father's voice.

*kill him You have to kill him, Jack, and her too. Because
a real artist must suffer. Because each man is the thing he is.
Because they'll always be conspiring against you, trying to hold
you back and drag you down. Right this minute that boy of yours
is in where he shouldn't be. Trespassing. That's what he's doing.
He's a goddam little pup. Care him for . . . Jacky, come here with
an inch of his life. Have a drink, Jacky, my boy, and we'll play
the elevator game. Then I'll go with you with you go to the
machine. I know you can do it. Of course you can. You must kill
him. You have to kill him, Jacky, and her too. Because a real ar-
tist must suffer. Because each man—*

His father's voice, going up higher and higher, becoming some-
thing maddening, not human at all, something squawking and peo-

lant and maddening, the voice of the Ghost-God, the Pig-God, coming dead at him out of the radio and

"No!" he screamed back. "You're *dead*, you're in your grave, you're not in me at all!" Because he had cut all the father out of him and it was not right that he should come back, creeping through this hole, two thousand miles from the New England town where his father had lived and died.

He raised the radio up and brought it down, and it smashed on the floor spliking old clocksprings and tubes like the result of some crazy elevator game gone awry, making his father's voice gone, leaving only his voice, Jack's voice, Jacky's voice, chanting in the cold reality of the office.

"—dead, you're dead, you're dead!"

And the startled sound of Wendy's feet hitting the floor over his head, and Wendy's startled, frightened voice: "Jack? Jack?"

He stood, blinking down at the shattered radio. Now there was only the snowmobile in the equipment shed to link them to the outside world.

He put his hands over his eyes and clutched at his temples. He was getting a headache.

27

CATATONIC

Wendy ran down the hall on her stocking feet and ran down the main stairs to the lobby two at a time. She didn't look up at the carpeted flight that led to the second floor, but if she had, she would have seen Danny standing at the top of them, still and silent, his unfocused eyes directed out into indifferent space, his thumb in his mouth, the collar and shoulders of his shirt damp. There were puffy bruises on his neck and just below his chin.

Jack's cries had ceased, but that did nothing to ease her fear. Ripped out of her sleep by his voice raised in that old, hefting pitch she remembered so well she still felt that she was dreaming—but another part knew she was awake, and that terrified her.

more. She had expected to burst into the office and find him
sitting over Danny's sprawled body, crying and confused.

She pushed through the door and Jack was standing there rubbing at his temples with his fingers. His face was ghost white. The box was CB's and lay at his feet in a sprinkling of broken glass.

Wenig: He asked me, mainly, "Wenig?"

The howl of lament seemed to grow and for a moment she saw his true face—the one he ordinarily kept so well hidden, and it was a face of desperate unhappiness, the face of an animal caught in a snare beyond its ability to decipher and render harmless. Then the muscles began to work, began to writhen under the skin, the mouth began to tremble convulsively, the Adam's apple began to rise and go

Her own new moment and surprise were over and by shock he was going to cry. She had seen him cry before but never since he stopped drinking and never in those days unless he was very drunk and pathetically remorseful. He was a tight man, drunk or not, and his loss control might end her all over again.

He came toward her, the years blurring over his lower lids, his head shaking nervously as if in a fruitless effort to ward off the emotional storm, and his eyes drew in a convulsive pain, his was evidently a huge rocking sea. His feet, clad in those Pampas sandals, were the wreck of the land and he almost staggered, his arms shaking her stagger back with his weight. He caught her wrist in his fingers, and then, with a look of agonized apprehension, he turned her face toward him. "What is it?"

[illegible]

Blaine caught a strong grip, his hands hanging to him, most crushing the wind from him, his head aching in the shock, and the soldiers shivering with it. Fighting his way was heavy and nerve. He was shuddering all over, as the wind came beneath his plaid shirt and jeans.

L. A. K. & W. H. T. [The White House]

And the so-called "cherry-picking" we're met with from different academic publishing centers and journals is not **spending themselves**.

Q. Now, I believe that you were talking about the fact that you were a member of the group that Dr. King was going to be in, is that right?

A. Yes, I was. The way he was of the time, I don't know.

was young at me and so I broke the radio to shut him up. To shut him up. He's dead. I don't even want to dream about him. He's dead. My God. Wendy my God I never had a nightmare like that. I never want to have another one. Christ. It was awful."

"You just fell asleep in the office?"

"No . . . not here. Downstairs." He was straightening a little now, his weight coming off her, and the steady back-and-forth motion of his head first slowed and then stopped.

"I was looking through those old papers. Sitting on a chair I set up down there. Milk receipts. Don't stuff. And I guess I just drowsed off. That's when I started to dream. I must have sleepwalked up there." He essayed a shaky, wile laugh against her neck. "And her first."

"Where is Danny, Jack?"

"I don't know. Isn't he with you?"

"He wasn't . . . downstairs with you?"

He looked over his shoulder and his face tightened at what he saw on her face.

"Never going to let me forget that, are you, Wendy?"

"Jack—"

"When I'm on my deathbed you'll lean over and say, 'It serves you right. Remember the time you broke Danny's arm?'"

"Jack!"

"Jack what?" he asked hoarsely, and jumped to his feet. "Are you denying that's what you're thinking? That I hurt him? That I hurt him once before and I could hurt him again?"

"I want to know where he is. That's all."

"Go ahead, yead your fucking head off, that'll make everything okay, won't it?"

She turned and walked out the door.

He watched her go, frozen for a moment, a bottle covered with fragments of broken glass in one hand. Then he dropped it into the wastebasket, went after her and caught her by the lobby desk. He put his hands on her shoulders and turned her around. Her face was carefully set.

"Wendy, I'm sorry. It was the dream. I'm upset. Forgive?"

"Of course," she said, her face now carrying expression. Her

wooden shoulders slipped out of his hands. She walked to the middle of the lobby and called "Hey doc! Where are you?"

Suence came back. She walked toward the double lobby doors, opened one of them, and stepped out onto the path Jack had shoveled. It was more like a trench the packed and drifted snow through which the path was cut came to her shoulders. She called him again, her breath coming out in a white plume. When she came back, in she had begun to look scared.

Controlling his irritation with her, he said reasonably, "Are you sure he's not sleeping in his room?"

"I told you, he was playing somewhere when I was knocking. I could hear him downstairs."

"Did you fall asleep?"

"What's that got to do with it? Yes, *Damn*."

"Did you look in his room when you came downstairs just now?"

"I—" She stopped.

He nodded. "I didn't really think so."

He started up the stairs without waiting for her. She followed him half running, but he was taking the risers two at a time. She almost crashed into his back when he came to a dead stop on the first-floor landing. He was rooted there, looking up, his eyes wide.

"What—" she began, and followed his gaze.

Danny still stood there, his eyes black, sucking his thumb. The marks on his throat were cruelly visible in the light of the blue electric flambeaux.

"*Danny!*" she shrieked.

It broke Jack's paralysis and they rushed up the stairs together to where he stood. Wendy fell on her knees beside him and swept the boy into her arms. Danny came properly enough, but he did not hug her back. It was like hugging a padded stick, and the sweet taste of horror flooded her mouth. He only sucked his thumb and stared with indifference, looking out into the void beyond both of them.

"Danny, what happened?" Jack asked. He reached his hand to touch the pulpy side of Danny's neck. "Who did this to you?"

"*Don't you touch him!*" Wendy hissed. She clutched Danny in her arms, lifted him, and had retreated halfway down the stairs before Jack could do more than stand up, confused.

"What? Wendy, what the hell are you t—"

"Don't you touch him! I'll kill you if you lay your hands on him again!"

"Wendy—"

"You bastard!"

She turned and ran down the rest of the stairs to the first floor. Danny's head jounced madly up and down as she ran. His thumb was lodged securely in his mouth. His eyes were soaped windows. She turned right at the foot of the stairs and Jack heard her feet retreat to the end of a shorter bedroom door slammed. The bolt was run home. The lock turned. Black silence. Then the soft, muffled sounds of comforting.

He stood for an unknown length of time, literally paralyzed by a what had happened in such a short space of time. His dream was still with him, painting everything a slightly lurid shade. It was as if he had taken a very mild mesaline hit. Had he maybe hurt Danny or Wendy though? Tried to strangle his son at his dead father's request? No. He would never hurt Danny.

(He felt down the stairs, Doctor.)

He would never hurt Danny now.

(He would know the bag bomb was defective?)

Never in his life had he been so fully vicious when he was sober.

(Except when you almost killed George Hatfield.)

"No," he cried into the darkness. He brought both fists crashing down on his legs, again and again and again.

* * *

Wendy sat in the overstuffed chair by the window with Danny on her lap, holding him, crooning the usual soothing words, the ones you never remember afterward no matter how a thing turns out. He lay faced on to her lap with neither protest nor gladness, like a dog perched on horse's back and his eyes didn't even shift toward the door when Jack cried out "No!" somewhere in the hallway.

The confusion had receded a little bit in her mind, but she now discovered something even worse behind. Panic.

Jack had done this, she was hardly able to fathom. His denial's mean-

nothing to her. She thought it was perfectly possible that Jack had tried to throw Danny in his sleep just as he had smashed the CB radio in his sleep. He was having a breakdown of some kind. But what was she going to do about it? She could no longer afford to here forever. They would have to go.

There was really only one question, and it was asked in a mental voice—after coolness and pragmatism, the voice of her maturity, a cold and passionless voice that was directed away from the closed circle of mother and child and out toward Jack. It was a voice that spoke of self-preservation only after self-preservation and its question was

(Exactly how dangerous is he?)

He had denied doing it. He had been horrified at the bruises, at Danny's sob, and in placable disconnection. If he had done it, a separate section of himself had been responsible. The fact that he had done it when he was asleep was—in a terrible, twisted way—encouraging. Was it possible that he could be trusted to get them out of here? To get them down and away. And after that . . .

But she could see no further than she and Danny arriving safe at Dr. Edmunds's office in Sawwinder. She had no particular need to see further. The present crisis was more than enough to keep her occupied.

She crooned to Danny, rocking him on her breasts. Her fingers on his shoulder, had noticed that his T-shirt was damp. But they had not bothered reporting the information to her brain in more than a cursory way. If it had been reported, she might have remembered that Jack's hands, as he had hugged her in the office and rubbed against her neck, had been dry. It might have given her pause. But her mind was still on other things. The decision had to be made—to approach Jack or not?

Actually it was not much of a decision. There was nothing she could do alone, not even carry Danny down to the office and call for help on the CB radio. He had suffered a great shock. He ought to be taken out quickly before any permanent damage could be done. She refused to let herself believe that permanent damage might already have been done.

And still she agonized over it, looking for another alternative

28

"IT WAS HER!"

Jack had stood on the stairs, listening to the crooning, comforting sounds coming muffled through the locked door, and slowly his confusion had given way to anger. Things had never really changed. Not to Wendy. He could be off the place for twenty years and still when he came home at night and she embraced him at the door, he would see, sense that little flare of her nostrils as she tried to divine scotch or gin James riding the outbound train of his exaltation. She was always going to assume the worst of him and Danny got in a car accident with a drunken businessman who had had a stroke just before the collision, she would see him, blame Danny's injuries on him and turn away.

Her face as she had snatched Danny away had rose up before him and he suddenly wanted to wipe the anger that had been on it out with his fist.

She had no goddam right!

Yes, maybe at first. He had been a lush, he had done terrible things. Breaking Danny's arm had been a terrible thing. But if a man reforms, doesn't he deserve to have his reformation credited sooner or later? And if he doesn't get it, doesn't he deserve the game to go with the name? Is a father constantly accuses his virgin daughter of screwing every boy in junior high, must she not at last grow weary (enough) of it & earn her scoldings? And if a wife secretly—and not so secretly—continues to believe that her teetotaling husband is a drunk . . .

He got up, walked slowly down to the first floor landing, and stood there for a moment. He took his handkerchief from his back pocket, wiped his lips with it, and considered going down and pounding on the bedroom door, demanding to be let in so he could see his son. She had no right to be so goddam highbanded.

Well, sooner or later she'd have to come out, unless she planned

big, pushed tops. Yes, he could even smell beer, the damp and fermented and yeasty smell drifting from the snail. He had hung finely misted air into his factory each every night when he came home from work.

Eyes widening, he rubbed the nose with a finger, wincing. But lighting came on, a dozen or twenty watt bulbs emanated on the tops of the three wagon wheel chandeliers overhead.

The snails were all empty. They had been on a yeasty gathering a good coat of dust. The beer taps were dry, as were the ceramic drains beneath them. To his left and right the velvet-upholstered booths stood like men with high backs, each one designed to give a maximum of privacy to the couple inside. Straight ahead, across the red-carpeted floor, forty barstools stood around a horseshoe-shaped bar. Each stool was upholstered in leather and embossed with cattle brands. Cattle H, Bar D (Dad, that was him), Rocking W, Lazy B.

He approached it, giving his head a little shake of bewilderment as he did so. It was like that day on the playground when he was five and there was no sense in thinking about what he could have sworn he had seen those betimes vaguely in the way you see the darkened shapes of furniture in a room where the curtains have been drawn. Mild grunts on glass. The only thing that remained was that smell of beer, and Jack knew that was a smell that faded into the worldwork of every bar in the world at a certain period of time, not to be eradicated by any cleaner intervened. Yet the smell here seemed sharp, almost fresh.

He sat down on one of the stools and propped his elbows on the bar's leather-cushioned edge. At his left hand was a bowl of peanuts—now empty, of course. The new bar had been open for nine or ten months and the damned thing was dry and his back. As the same old beerly power wave of this was a snap over him and he physically aching for a drink seemed to work itself into his body to his throat to his mouth and nose stinging and working the tissues as it went making them dry out for something wet and long and cold.

He glanced at the shelves again in wild, irrational hope but the shelves were just as empty as before. He grunted in pain and frustration. His fists, clenching slowly in the minutes since he sat on the bar's leather-padded edge.

"Like hell," he said. "A helluva long time, huh?"

"I don't know what I asked and what I would be

"Now I'm really glad you asked me that," Jack said, "because I happen to have two twenties and two tens in my wallet and I was afraid they were going to get lost. There are a hundred more at Appleton's, but I don't have 'em around here with you. You have 'em? And I thought they were five-dollar bills. I was looking for 'em."

Lloyd sympathized.

"So there was all right so far. You see me up an even twenty months. An even twenty, just like hell, huh? One for every month I've been on the wagon and one to grow on. You can do that, can't you? You aren't too busy?"

Lloyd said he wasn't busy at all.

"You mean you like those months sitting at the bar, you're sitting at the bar, you're down one by one. What's that burden, Lloyd my man?"

"I don't need to do the job," Jack reached in his pocket for his money clip and came out with an Excelsior bottle instead. His money clip was on the bedroom bureau and of course his secretary wants to be locked out of the bedroom. Nice going, Wendy. You bleeding bitch.

"I seem to be momentarily high," Jack said. "How's my credit in this joint, anyhow?"

Lloyd said his credit was fine.

"That's super. I like you, Lloyd. You were always the best of them. Best damned barkeep between Barre and Portland, Maine. Portland, Oregon, for that matter."

Lloyd thanked him for saying so.

Jack thumped the cap for a last Excelsior bottle, shook two shots out and tipped them into his mouth. The anesthetic and compelling taste flooded in.

He had a sudden sensation that people were watching him, curiously and with some contempt. The booths behind him were full. There were graying, disfigured men and beautiful young girls, all of them in costume, watching this sad exercise in the dramatic arts with cold amusement.

Jack whirled on his stool.

The booths were all empty, stretching away from the lounge

door to the left and right. He leaned his left cornering to flank the bar's horse-shoe curve down the short length of the room. Padded leather seats and backs. Gleaming dark Formica tables, an ash-tray in each one, a book of matches in each as if by the word *Corruption*. Lounge slumped on each in gilt-leaf above the barwing-door logo.

He turned back, swallowing the rest of the dissolving Excedrin with a grimace.

"Lloyd, you're a wonder," he said. "Set up a ready. Your speed is only exceeded by the sou'w'ind of your Neapitan eyes. *Salute*."

Jack contemplated the twenty imaginary drinks, the martini glasses blushing droplets of condensation, each with a swizzle poked through a pump green olive. He crid almost see a grin on the air.

"The wagon," he said. "Have you ever been acquainted with a gentleman who has hopped up on the wagon?"

Lloyd allowed as how he had met such men from time to time.

"Have you ever renewed acquaintances with such a man after he hopped back off?"

Lloyd could not, in all honesty, recall.

You never did, then, Jack said. He cupped his hand around the first drink, carried his fist to his mouth which was open and turned his fist up. He swallowed and then tossed the imaginary glass over his shoulder. The people were back again, fresh from their costume ball studying him laughing behind their hands. He could see them. If the backbar had featured a mirror instead of those damn stupid empty shelves, he could have seen them. Let them stare. Fuck them. Let anybody stare who wanted to stare.

"No, you never did," he told Lloyd. "Few men ever return from the fabied Wagon, but those who do come with a fearful tale to tell. When you jump on, it seems like the brightest clearest Wagon you ever saw, with ten-foot wheels to keep the bed of it high out of the gutter where all the drunks are laying around with their brown bags and their Thunderbird and their Cranial Flash's Popskull Bourbon. You're away from all the people who throw you nasty looks and tell you to clean up your act or go put it on in another town. From the gutter that's the finest-lookin' Wagon you ever saw, Lloyd my boy. All hung with bunting and a

with bars on the windows, a church for women and a prison for you."

He stopped. Lloyd was gone. Worse still, he had never been there. The drinks had never been there. Only the people in the booths, the people from the costume party, and he could almost hear their muffled laughter as they held their hands to their mouths and pointed, their eyes sparkling with cruel pinpoints of light.

He whirled around again. "Leave me."

(alone?)

All the booths were empty. The sound of laughter had died like a star of autumn leaves. Jack stared at the empty lounge for a tick of time, his eyes wide and dark. A pulse beat noticeably in the center of his forehead. In the very center of him a cold certainty was forming and the certainty was that he was losing his mind. He felt an urge to pick up the bar stool next to him, reverse it, and go through the place like an avenging whirl wind. Instead he whirled back around to the bar and began to belch.

"Roll me over

In the clo-ho-ver,

Roll me over, lay me down and do it again."

Danny's face rose before him, not Danny's normal face, lively and alert, the eyes sparkling and open, but the catatonic, zombie-like face of a stranger: the eyes dull and opaque, the mouth pursed babyishly around his thumb. What was he doing, sitting here and talking to himself like a sulky teen-ager when his son was upstairs someplace, acting like something that belonged in a padded room, acting the way Wally Holis said Vic Stenger had been before the men in the wire chairs had to come and take him away?

(But I never put a hand on him. Goddammit I didn't!)

"Jack?" The voice was timid, hesitant.

He was so startled he almost fell off the stool, whirling it around. Wendy was standing just inside the bar's swinging doors. Danny cradled in her arms had some waxen horror show dummy. The three of them made a tableau that Jack felt very strongly. "I was just before the curtain of Act II in some old-time temperance play, one so

poorly mounted that the prop man had forgotten to stock the shelves of the Den of Iniquity.

"I never touched him," Jack said thickly. "I never have since the day I broke his arm. Not even to spank him."

"Jack, that doesn't matter now. What matters is—"

"*That matters!*" he shouted. He brought one fist crashing down on the bar hard enough to make the empty peanut dishes jump.

"*It matters, goddammit, it matters!*"

"Jack, we have to get him off the mountain. He's—"

Danny began to stir in her arms. The slack, empty expression on his face had begun to break up like a block made of ice over some buried surface. His lips twisted, as if at some weird taste. His eyes widened. His hands came up as if to cover them and then dropped back.

Abruptly he stiffened in her arms. His back arched into a bow, making wincey stagger. And he suddenly began to shriek mad sounds that escaped his straining throat in howling crazy echoing bobs. The sound seemed to fill the empty downstairs and come back at him like banshees. There might have been a hundred Dannys, all screaming at once.

"Jack!" she cried at length. "On God Jack what's wrong with him?"

He came off his stool numb from the waist down, more gathered than he had ever been in his life. What had happened? What had he done? What dark nest. And what was she doing here to sing him?

"Danny!" he roared. "Danny!"

Danny saw him. He broke her mouth as if with a sudden fierce swing, and gave her no chance to hold on. She stumbled back against the bar, his arms around her throat.

"Danny!" he screamed, turning. "Jack! His eyes! Huge and bright! Oh! Dark! Danny! was her hair! Her! Oh! Danny! ugg—"

He grabbed for Jack's arm like a starfish, making Jack rock on his feet. Danny's head rolled back as if he were seeing to himself what was a ghastly, horrible thing he had done. He was shaking his head and feeling his eyes close and was hitting against his belly.

Daddy! it was her

Jack looked slowly up into Wendy's face. His eyes were like small silver coins.

"Wendy?" Voice soft, nearly purring. "Wendy, what did you do to him?"

Wendy stared back at him, a stunned disbelief, her face pale. She shook her head.

"Oh Jack, you must know—"

Outside it had begun to snow again.

29

KITCHEN TALK

Jack carried Danny into the kitchen. The boy was still sobbing wildly, refusing to look up from Jack's chest. In the kitchen he gave Danny back to Wendy, who still seemed stunned and disbelieving.

"Jack, I don't know what he's talking about. Please, you must believe that."

"I do believe it," he said, although he had to admit to himself that he gave him a certain amount of pleasure to see the shoe switched to the other foot with such dazzling, unexpected speed. But his anger at Wendy had been only a passing guttural twitch. In his heart he knew Wendy would pour a can of gasoline over herself and strike a match before harming Danny.

The large tea-kettle was on the back burner, poking along on low heat. Jack dropped a teabag into his own large ceramic cup and poured hot water halfway.

"Go, cooking sherry, don't you?" he asked Wendy.

"What?" oh, sure. Two or three bottles of it.

"Which cupboard?"

She pointed, and Jack took one of the bottles down. He poured a hefty dollop into the teacup, put the sherry back, and filled the last quarter of the cup with milk. Then he added three tablespoons of sugar and stirred. He brought it to Danny, whose subs

had tapered off to st (things and hichings. But he was trembling all over, and his eyes were wide and starey

"Want you to drink this, duc," Jack said. "I s going to taste fugging awful, but it'll make you feel better. Can you drink it for your daddy?"

Danny nodded that he could and took the cup. He drank a little, grimaced, and looked questioningly at Jack. Jack nodded, and Danny drank again. Wendy felt the faintest twis of jealousy somewhere in her middle, knowing the boy would not have drunk it for her.

O the heris of that came an uncomfortable, even startling thought. Had she *wanted* to think Jack was to blame? Was she the jealous? It was the way he mo her would have though. That was the really horrible thing. She could remember a Sunday when her Dad had taken her to the park and she had toppled from the second tier of the jungle gym, cutting both knees. When her father brought her home her mother had shrieked at him: *what did you do? what weren't you watching her? what kind of a father are you?*

(She hounded him to his grave, by the time he divorced her it was too late.)

She had never even given Jack the benefit of the doubt. Not the smokes. Wendy felt her face burn yet knew with a kind of helplessness that by now if the whole thing were to be played over again, she would do and think the same way. She carried part of her mother with her always, for good or bad.

Jack said she began to cry and if she meant to apologize or justify it, he she knew, would fail miserably.

"Not now," he said.

Jack took down ten minutes and took half of the big cup's contents and by that time he had calmed visibly. The shakes were almost gone.

"I know he has no secret," said Wendy's mother. "Danny doesn't like you. Can't you see exactly what happened to you? It's very important."

Danny looked from Jack to Wendy then back again in a silent pause. He said nothing and made himself very small. He whooped the wind in his laughing face, snow down from his mouth with the creaking and grunting of the machine as it started

into another storm. The fact of her disconnection came to Wendy with a unexpected force as it sometimes did, like a blow under the heart.

"I want to tell you everything," Danny said. "I wish I had before." He picked up the cup and held it as if comforted by the warmth.

"Why didn't you, son?" Jack brushed Danny's sweaty, tangled hair back gently from his brow.

"Because Uncle Al got you the job. And I couldn't figure out how it was good for you here and bad for you here at the same time at was . . ." He looked at them for help. He did not have the necessary word.

"A dilemma?" Wendy asked gently. "When neither choice seems any good?"

"Yes, that." He nodded, relieved.

Wendy said, "The day that you trimmed the hedges, Danny, and I had a talk in the truck. The day the first real snow came. Remember?"

Jack nodded. The day he had trimmed the hedges was very clear in his mind.

Wendy sighed. "I guess we didn't talk enough. Danny, don't."

Danny, the picture of wide shock, his head

aching with what he'd just heard, asked, "You don't want to tell me how much I like my wife and son?"

"I'm guessing how much they love you."

Whatever it was, I don't understand. "I feel like I came out of a movie just after the intermission."

We were discussing you. We've said enough. And now we don't say it in words, but we both know. Me because I'm your wife and Danny because I'm . . . just a son-in-law, I guess."

Jack was silent.

"Danny said it just now. The place seemed good for you. You were away from all the pressures, and now we're so close to my a Stovington. You were your own boss, working with your hands so you could save our . . . and save you. I want to try your evenings with me. Then . . . I don't know just when . . . the place began to seem odd to me. Something was happening. I was looking through those old papers, and that . . . his story. Taking in your sleep—"

"In my sleep?" Jack asked. His face wore a cautious, startled expression. "I talk in my sleep?"

"Most of it is sorry. Once I got up to use the bathroom and you were saying, 'To hell' with all bring in the slots at least, no one will know, no one will ever know.' Another time you woke me right up, practically yelling. Unmask, unmask, unmask.'"

"Jesus Christ," he said, and rubbed a hand over his face. He looked ill.

"All your old drinking habits, too. Chewing Exccarin. Wiping your mouth all the time. Crazy in the morning. And you haven't been able to finish the play yet, have you?"

"No. Not yet, but it's only a matter of time. I've been thinking about something else—a new project—"

"This note. The project, Al Shockley called you about. The one he wanted you to drop."

How do you know about that? Jack barked. "Were you listening in? You—"

"No," she said. "I couldn't have listened in if I'd wanted to—and you'd know that. If you were thinking straight. Danny and I were downstairs that night. The switchboard is shut down. Our phone upstairs was the only one in the hotel that was working, because it's patched directly into the outside line. You told me so yourself."

Then how could you know what Al told me?"

"Danny told me. Danny knew. The same way he sometimes knows when things are misplaced or when people are chattering about divorce."

"The doctor said—"

She shook her head impatiently. "The doctor was full of shit and we both know it. We've known it all the time. Remember when Danny said he wanted to see the firetrucks? I said, 'was no harm.' *He was a baby. He knows things.* And now I'm afraid."

She looked at the bruises on Danny's neck.

"Did you really know Uncle Al had called me, Danny?"

Danny nodded. "He was really mad, Daddy. Because you called Mr. Uman and Mr. Uman called him. Uncle Al didn't want you to write anything about the hotel."

"Jesus," Jack said again. "The bruises, Danny. Who tried to strangle you?"

Danny's face went dark. "Her," he said. The woman in that room. In 217. The dead lady. His lips began to tremble again, and he seized the teacup and drank.

Jack and Wendy exchanged a scared look over his bowed head.

"Do you know anything about this?" he asked her.

She shook her head. "Not about this, no."

"Danny?" He raised the boy's frightened face. "My son. We're right here."

"I know it was bad here," Danny said in a low voice. "Ever since we were in Boulder. Because Tony gave me dreams about it."

"What dreams?"

"I can't remember everything. He showed me the Overlook at night, with a skull and crossbones on the front. And there was something. Something I don't remember well. Something chasing after me. A monster. Tony showed me about several."

"What's that, doc?" Wendy asked.

He shook his head. "I don't know."

"Run, like you do to a place if you run," Jack asked.

Danny shook his head again. "I don't know. There was a fire, and Mr. Harkness asked me to get in his car. Because he has the strongest car."

"Strong?"

"Yes." Danny made a sweeping gesture, implying that with his hands he's been able to understand things. "I know things. Sometimes you see things, like me knowing Uncle Al killed Aunt Mildred, and knowing you cut me and Mr. Harkness. And he was picking people for the Army when he knew his brother got killed in a car crash. And was I supposed to know it was true?"

"How could?" Jack whispered. "You're not making this up, are you, Dan?"

Danny shook his head again. "No, I swear. God. Then when I was in the car with Mr. Harkness, he said I was the best witness to anything he'd ever seen. And he took me to the car that was his brother's car. And he said I was the best witness to anything he'd ever seen."

His parents looked at each other and then looked at him.

Mr. Harkness got into the car with him, and he said, "Danny, Wendy. He said this was a bad idea. And he said I was the best witness to anything he'd ever seen."

said he'd seen things. I saw something, too. Right after I talked to him. When Mr. Ullman was taking us around."

"What was it?" Jack asked.

"In the Presidential Suite. On the wall by the door going into the bedroom. A whole lot of blood and some other stuff. Gushy stuff. I think . . . that the gushy stuff must have been brains."

"Oh my God," Jack said.

Wendy was now very pale, her lips nearly gray.

"This place," Jack said. "Some pretty bad types owned it awhile back. Organization people from Las Vegas."

"Crooks?" Danny asked.

"Yeah, crooks." He looked at Wendy. "In 1966 a big-time hood named Vito Genelli got killed up there, along with his two bodyguards. There was a picture in the newspaper. Danny just described the picture."

"Mr. Halorann said he saw some other stuff." Danny told them. "Once about the playground. And once it was something bad in that room 2-7. A maid saw it and lost her job because she talked about it. So Mr. Halorann went up and he saw it, too. But he didn't talk about it because he didn't want to lose his job. Except, he told me never to go in there. But I did. Because I believed him when he said the things you saw here couldn't hurt you." This last was nearly whispered in a low, husky voice, and Danny touched the puffed circle of bruises on his neck.

"What about the playground?" Jack asked in a strange, casual voice.

"I don't know. The playground, he said. And the hedge animals."

Jack jumped a little, and Wendy looked at him curiously.

"Have you seen anything down here, Jack?"

"No," he said. "Nothing."

Danny was looking at him.

"Nothing," he said again, more calmly. And that was true. He had seen the victim of an hallucination. And that was all.

"Danny, we have to hear about the woman," Wendy said gently.

So Danny told them, but his words came in erratic bursts, sometimes almost verging on incomprehensible garble in his hurry to

spirit could be freed at last. He pushed her ten inches up against his mother's breasts as he talked.

"Went to the bathroom and he had sex and went away. Was all I could do. He promised I had to know. And he . . ."

"Was in the club. Sex was a buzz for me and up. She was a real nut. . . . When he had sex with her. He wanted me to do it with her. And he started to get it with her. She was going to let me know she did because I could see it. She was when he had sex with her. You and Daddy. I think I was in the room. I was here. I think he . . . like the wasps. . . . I was in my room. Only wanting to hurt. Like the wasps."

He swallowed and there was silence for a moment or a quiet while the image of the woman took on them.

"So . . . that." Danny said. "I ran but the door was closed. I left it once but it was closed. I'd think about just opening it again and running out. I was scared. So I just . . . I came again. I hit the door and closed my eyes and I thought of my Mr. He had all the things here were just like Nick's in a book and I . . . kept saying to myself . . . I was not getting it. I was not getting it. She would grow up. But it didn't work."

His voice began to rise hysterically.

"She grabbed me . . . I held me and . . . I could see her eyes . . . how her eyes were . . . and he started to choke me . . . I could smell her . . . I could smell how dead she was."

"Stop now, stop. Wendy's in a room. Stop. Danny's a real right. It—"

She was going ready to go out her door to get to the Wendy Terrace Apartment Club for Penning.

"Let him finish," Jack said curtly.

"There isn't any more." Danny said. "I passed out. I think because she was choking me or just because I was scared. When I came to, I was dreaming you and Mommy were fighting over me and you wanted to do the bad thing again. Danny. Then I knew it wasn't a dream or a . . . and I was awake. . . . I was in my pants. I wet my pants like a baby." His head came back again. Wendy's sweater and he began to cry with terrible weakness, his hands lying limp and spent in his lap.

Jack got up. "Take care of him."

"What are you going to do?" Her face was full of dread.
 "I'm going to let it all out, what do you think I was going to do? Have coffee?"

"No! Don't, Jack, please don't!"

"Wendy, I have someone else in the hotel. We have to know."
"Don't you dare do it!" she shrieked at him. She flew upon him with the force of her cry.

Jack said: "Wendy, that's a remarkable imitation of your mom."

She burst into tears then began to cover her face because Danny was on her lap.

"I'm sorry," Jack said. "But I have to, you know. I'm the god-dam caretaker. It's what I'm paid for."

She only cried harder and let her thin way going out of the kitchen rubbing his shoulder with her handkerchief as the door swung shut behind him.

"Don't worry, momma," Danny said. "He'll be all right. He doesn't mind. Nothing here can hurt him."

Through her tears she said: "No, I don't believe that."

30

217 REVISITED

He took the elevator up and it was strange, because none of them had used the elevator since they moved in. He threw the brass handle over and it wheezed vibrantly up the shaft, the brass grate rattling madly. Wendy had a true caustrophobe's horror of the elevator, he knew. She envisioned the three of them trapped in theween floors while winter storms raged outside; she could see them growing thinner and weaker, starving to death. Or perhaps dining on each other the way those Rugby players had. He remembered a bumper sticker he had seen in Boulder, RUGBY PLAYERS EAT THEIR OWN DEAD. He could think of others. YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT. Or menu items. Welcome to the Overlook Dining Room, Pride of the Rockies. Eat in Splendor at the Roof of the World. Human Manich Broiled Over Manches *La Spéciale* à

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 10. A. The first of the two is the first of the two

[illegible][illegible]

He walked down the hall, removed a passenger's bag, and took it to a porter and slipped on it. The porter, who was in the garden at the time, was not stopped and he walked directly down to the bathroom door. A curious company had gathered by Arthur Watson had mentioned no names or room number. He was sure that it was he took the cover to the lady and her companion. He said that it was the lady who where she had been and he had felt that it was a very good lounge hoose.

[illegible]

The shear current in a pipe of peak was about 10 cm/s, and around the long claw-footed tub.

(nevertheless they did move)

And for the first time he felt a new sense of urgency (almost sickness) that had come over him when Danny ran to him, knowing it was her? It was her deserting him. A cold finger pressed against the base of his spine, cooling him fifteen degrees. It was pushed by other and he suddenly ripped himself up the back of his doublet, exposing a pressing to spine as a jugular instrument.

His anger at Danny evaporated and as he stepped forward and pushed the shower curtain back his mouth was dry and he felt only sympathy for his son and anger for himself.

The tub was dry and empty.

Relief and irritation vented in a sudden "Pah!" sound that escaped his compressed lips like a very small explosive. The tub had been scrubbed clean at the end of the season except for the rust stain under the twin faucets it sparkled. There was a faint but detectable smell of cleanser, he knew that can't remove your nose with the smell of its own righteousness for weeks, even months after it has been used.

He bent down and ran his fingertips along the bottom of the tub. Dry as a bone. Not even a hint of moisture. The boy had been either hunkering or outright lying. He felt angry again. That was when the bathmat on the floor caught his attention. He frowned down at it. What was a bathmat doing in here? It should be down in the linen cupboard at the end of the wing with the rest of the sheets and towels and pillow slips. All the linen was supposed to be there. Not even the beds were really made up in these guest rooms, the mattresses had been zipped in or clear plastic and then covered with bedpeas. He supposed Danny might have gone down and gotten it, the pocket would open the linen cupboard, but why? He brushed the tips of his fingers back and forth across it. The bathmat was bone dry.

He went back to the bathroom door and stood in it. Everything was all right. The boy had been ~~resting~~. There was not a thing out of place. It was a little puzzling about the bathmat's location, but the logical explanation was that some barbarian had moved like mad on the last day of the season had lost his mind to pick it up. Other than that everything was.

His nostrils flared a little. Disinfectant, that sed rightous spray, cleaner-than-thou. And—

curtain back. To expose whatever might be there. Instead he turned with jerky, uncoordinated strides, his heart whudding frightfully in his chest, and went back into the bedroom, closing the door.

The door to the hall was shut.

He stared at it for a long, immobile second. He could taste his terror now. It was in the back of his throat like a taste of goose-over cherries.

He walked to the door with that same jerky stride and tried to reach his fingers around a round the knob.

(It won't open.)

But it did.

He turned off the light with a fumbling gesture, stepped out into the hall, and pulled the door shut without looking back. From inside, he seemed to hear an odd wet thumping sound, far off, dim, as if someone had just scrambled belatedly out of the tub, as if to greet a caller as if it had realized the caller was leaving before the social amenities had been completed and so it was now rushing to the door, all purple and grunting, to invite the caller back inside. Perhaps forever.

Footsteps approaching the door or only the heartbeat in his ears?

He fumbled at the passkey. It seemed saddy unwavering to turn in the lock. He attacked the passkey. The tumbler suddenly fell and he stepped back against the corridor's far wall, a little groan of relief escaping him. He closed his eyes and all the old phrases began to parade through his mind, it seemed there must be hundreds of them,

(cracking up not playing with a full deck lostya marbles guy just went bonny ones he went up and over the high side went bananas lost his football crackers nuts half a seabag)

(meaning the same thing - see a vast mind)

No," he whimpered, hardly aware that he had been reduced to this, whispering with his eyes shut like a child. "Oh no, God. Please, God, no."

But below the turmoil of his chaotic thoughts, below the triphammer beat of his heart, he could hear the soft and far-off sound of the doorknob being turned to and fro as something ticked in tried desperately to get out, something that wanted to meet him, something that would like to be introduced to his family

He stepped forward to the door and looked out. The
 night was dark and cold. He saw the stars twinkling
 in the sky. He felt a shiver run down his spine. He
 knew, there was sadness.

He turned back and looked at the clock. It was
 late. He had watched last the night.

He knew the reason. He knew the reason why. He
 would be the eye but to eye but why?

His feet were moving

(eyes don't but me now)

He stepped forward and looked away from the door and
 with a look of surprise he saw a white light. He
 knew the reason. He knew the reason why. He
 would be the eye but to eye but why?

He knew the reason. He knew the reason why. He
 would be the eye but to eye but why?

THE VERDICT

He stepped into the kitchen and looked down, bounding the
 package. He looked up off his left hand, making the chair on the
 wall. He knew the reason. He knew the reason why. He
 would be the eye but to eye but why?

He knew the reason. He knew the reason why. He
 would be the eye but to eye but why?

"Nothing there," he said, assuaged by the heartiness of his voice. "Not a thing."

He bounced the passkey up and down, up and down, smiling reassuringly at them, watching the relief spread over their faces, and thought he had never in his life wanted a drink so badly as he did right now.

32

THE BEDROOM

Late that afternoon Jack got a c from the first floor storage room and put it in the corner of their bedroom. Wendy had expected that the boy would be having the night getting on to sleep, but Danny was nodding before "The Waltons" was half over and fifteen minutes after they had tucked him in he was fast down in sleep, moveless, one hand locked under his cheek. Wendy sat watching him, holding her place in a fat paperback copy of *Casheemara* with one finger. Jack sat at his desk, looking at his play.

"Oh shit," Jack said.

Wendy looked up from her contemplation of Danny. "What?"

"Nothing."

He looked down at the play with smoldering disappointment. How could he have thought it was good? It was terrible. It had been done a thousand times. Worse, he had no idea how to finish it. Once it had seemed simple enough. Denker, in a fit of rage, seizes the poker from beside the fireplace and beats senseless Gary to death. Then, standing spread-legged over the body, the bloody poker in one hand, he screams at the audience: "It's here somewhere and I will find it!" Then, as the lights dim and the curtains slowly drawn, the audience sees Gary's body face down on the forestage as Denker strides to the upstage bookcase and feverishly begins pulling books from the shelves, looking at them, throwing them aside. He had thought it was something old enough to be

new a play whose novelty alone might be enough to see it through a successful Broadway run, a tragedy in five acts.

But in addition to his sudden distress in the east, the other monkey's history, something else had happened. He had developed opposing feelings about his characters. It's was something quite new. Ordinarily he looked at all his characters, the good and the bad. He was glad he did. It allowed him to try to see their other sides and understand their motives more clearly. His latest story, sold to a small southern Maine magazine called *Catbird* for copies, had been a piece called "The Monkey Is Here." Paul DeLong. It had been about a child the ester about a century suicide in his turn-of-bed room. The child murderer's name had been Paul DeLong. Monkey to his friends. Jack had liked Monkey very much. He sympathized with Monkey's boy-fire need, knowing that Monkey was not being very responsible for the three rape murders in his past. There had been bad parents, the mother a heater as his own father had been, the mother a pimp and saint dishrugs his mother had been. A homosexual experience in grammar school. Public humiliation. Worse experiences in high school and college. He had been arrested and sent to an institution after exposing himself to a pair of teenage girls getting off a school bus. Worst of all, he had been dismissed from the institution, let back into the streets, because the man in charge had decided he was a liar. This man's name had been Crommer. Crommer had known that Monkey DeLong was exhibiting deviant symptoms, but he had written the good, hopeful report and had let him go anyway. Jack liked and sympathized with Crommer too. Crommer had to put an understated and understunded insurrection and try to keep the whole thing together with his wife, his wife, and nickle and dime appropriations from a state legislature who had to go back and face the voters. Crommer knew that Monkey could interact with other people, that he could himself his parts, or try to wish himself away from with the seasons. He did not think he was Napoleon. The chief psychiatrist in charge of Monkey's case thought there was a better than even chance that Monkey could make it on the street, and this both knew that he would get a map is in his mind, and the more he comes to mind that case is a symptom of a monkey with his smack. And meanwhile people were knocking down the doors. Paranoias, schizoids, cyenids, several armies men who claimed

thing about the abuse of power. Now he tended more and more to see Denker as a Mr. Chips figure, and the tragedy was not the intellectual racking of Gary Benson but rather the destruction of a kindly old teacher and headmaster unable to see through the cynical wiles of this monster masquerading as a boy.

He hadn't been able to finish the play.

Now he sat looking down at it, scowling, wondering if there was any way he could salvage the situation. He didn't really think there was. He had begun with one play and it had somehow turned into another, prestidigango. Well, what the hell. Either way it had been done before. Either way it was a load of shit. And why was he driving himself crazy about it long as anyway? After the day just gone by it was no wonder he couldn't think straight.

"—get him down?"

He looked up, trying to blink the cobwebs away. "Huh?"

"I said, now are we going to get him down? We've got to get him out of here, Jack."

For a moment his wits were so scattered that he wasn't even sure what she was asking about. Then he realized and uttered a short, barking laugh.

"You say that as if it were so easy."

"I didn't mean—"

"No problem, Wendy. I'll just change clothes in the telephone booth down in the lobby and fly him to Denver on my back. Superman Jack Torrance, they called me in my salad days."

Her face registered now hurt.

"I understand the problem, Jack. The radio is broken. The snow . . . but you have to understand Darny's problem. My God, don't you? He was nearly catatonic, Jack! What if he hadn't come out of that?"

"But he did," Jack said, a trifle shrilly. He had been frightened at Darny's blank-eyed, slack-faced state too, of course he had. At first. But he mope he thought about it the more he wondered if it hadn't been a piece of play acting put on to escape his punishment. He had, after all, been trespassing.

"All the same," she said. She came to him and sat on the end of the bed by his desk. Her face was both surprised and worried. Jack, the bruises on his neck. Something got at him? And I want him away from it!"

"Don't shout," he said. "My head aches, Wendy. I'm as worried about this as you are, so please . . . don't . . . shout."

"All right," she said, lowering her voice. "I won't shout. But I can't understand you, Jack. Someone is in here with us. And not a very nice someone either. We have to get down to Sidwinder right at Darny but a lot of us. Quickly. And you . . . you're sitting there reading your *play*!"

"We have to get down, we have to get down," you keep saying that. You must think I really am Superman."

"I think you're my husband," she said softly and looked down at her hands.

His temper flared. He slammed the playscript down, knocking the edges of the pile out of true again and crumpling the sheets on the bottom.

"A lot of time you get some of the horrible things into you, Wendy. You don't seem to have memorized them, as the songbooks say. They're knocking aound up in your head like a bunch of those cuckaballs. You need to shoot them into the pockets. You need to understand that *we are snowed in*."

Darny had suddenly become active in his bed. Still sleeping, he had begun to twist and turn. The way he always did when we fought, Wendy thought drowsily. And we're doing it again.

"Don't wake him up, Jack. Please."

He glanced over at Darny and some of the flash went out of his cheeks. "Okay. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I sounded mad. Wendy. It's not really for you. But I have to say that. If it's anybody's fault is mine. That was an horrible look on the outside. Only a little. Please excuse it. As Mister Ranger. We can't stay out this time."

"Don't," she said, and put a hand on his shoulder. He leaned his head against it. She brushed his hair with her other hand. "I guess you've got a right after what I accused you of. Sometimes I make my mother feel like a ha-ha. But you have to understand and that's the thing . . . are hard to get over. You have to understand that."

"Do you mean this now?" Heaps had turned.

"Yes, Wendy, yes," and she seemed to nod. "But it's not so bad. I worry when he goes out to play. I worry about him wandering off or wandering over to the wrong side with raining wheels. I worry about his school and his friends and about this thing where he can't

his shine. I worry. Because he's little and he seems very fragile and because . . . because something in his brief seems to want him. And it will go through us to get him if it has to. That's why we must get him out, Jack. I know that! I feel that. We must get him out!"

Her hand had tightened painfully on his shoulder in her agitation but he didn't move away. One hand found the firm weight of her left breast and he began to stroke it through her shirt.

"Wendy," he said, and stopped. She waited for him to rearrange whatever he had to say. His strong hand on her breast felt good, soothing. "I could maybe snowshoe him down. He could walk part of the way himself, but I would mostly have to carry him. It would mean camping out one, two, maybe three nights. That would mean buying or trading in carry supplies and bedrolls, etc. We have the AM-FM radio, so we could pick a day when the weather forecast called for a three-day spell of good weather. But if the forecast was wrong," he finished, his voice soft and measured, "I think we might die."

Her face had paled. It noosed slowly against his. He continued to stroke her breast, rubbing the ball of his thumb gently over the nipple.

She made a soft sound. From his words or in reaction to his gentle pressure on her breast, he couldn't tell. He raised his hand slightly and undid the top button of her shirt. Wendy shifted her legs slightly. At once her jeans seemed too tight, slightly irritating in a pleasant sort of way.

"I would mean leaving you alone because you can't snowshoe without beams. It would be maybe three days or not knowing. Would you want that?" His hand dropped to the second button, stopped . . . and the beginning of her cleavage was exposed.

"No," she said in a voice that was slightly thick. She glanced over at Davy who had stopped twisting and turning. His thumb had crept back to his mouth. So that was a fight. But Jack was leaving something out of the picture. It was . . . Jack. There was something else . . . what?

It was Wendy put. Jack said a few things about finding French buttons with the same decorative sewings . . . rangers from the park or a game warden is going to poke in here just to find out how we're doing. At that point we simply told him we was doing

He "see to it." He slipped her naked breasts into the wide V of the open shirt, then, and molded his lips around the stem of a nipple. It was hard and erect. He slipped his tongue slowly back and forth across it in a way he knew she liked. Wendy moaned a little and arched her back.

("Something I've forgotten?")

His eyes were asked. On their own her hands sought the back of his head so that when he answered his voice was muffled against her flesh.

"How would the ranger take us out?"

He raised his head slightly to answer and then settled his mouth against the other nipple.

"If the helicopter was spoken for I guess I would have to be by snowmobile."

("?")

"But we have one of those," Lillian said so.

His mouth froze against her breast for a moment, and then he sat up. Her own face was slightly flushed, her eyes overbright. Jack's, on the other hand, was calm, as if he had been reading a newspaper, not kind of engaging in foreplay with his wife.

"If there's a snowmobile there's no problem," he said evenly. "We could all three go down together."

"Even so, I've never driven a snowmobile in my life."

"It can be a little hard to learn. Back in Vermont you see teenagers driving them in the fields . . . although what their parents can be thinking of I don't know. And you had a motorcycle when we met." He had, a Honda 350cc. He had traded it in on a Sub shortly after he and Wendy took up residence together.

"I suppose I could," he said slowly. "But I wonder how we'll be maintained. Lillian and Watson . . . they run this place from May to October. They have summertime mania. I know it won't have gas in it. There may not be plugs or a battery, either. I don't want you getting your hopes up over your head, Wendy."

She was really excited now, leaning over him, her breasts tumbling out of her shirt. He had a sudden impulse to seize one and . . . but she stopped. Maybe that would catch her to shut up.

"The gas is no problem," she said. "The VW and the hotel truck are useful. There's gas for the emergency generator down-

starts, too. And there must be a gascan on in that shed so you could carry extra."

"Yes," he said. "There is." Actually there were three of them, two five-gallons and a two-gallon.

"I'll bet the sparkplugs and the battery are out there, too. Nobody would store their snowmobile in one place and the plugs and battery someplace else, would they?"

"Doesn't seem likely. Does it?" He got up and walked over to where Danny was sleeping. A spider on his ear had fallen across his forehead, and Jack brushed it away gently. Danny didn't stir.

"And if you can get it running you'll take us out?" she asked from behind him. "On the first day the radio says good weather?"

For a moment he didn't answer. He stood looking down at his son, and his mixed feelings dissolved in a wave of love. He was the way she had said: vulnerable, fragile. The marks on his neck were very prominent.

"Yes," he said. "I'll get it running and we'll get out as quick as we can."

"Thank God."

He turned around. She had taken off her shirt and lay on the bed. Her heavy hair, her breasts aimed perfectly at the ceiling. She was playing with them lazily, flicking at the nipples. Harry up, gentle, calm. She said softly to him:

* * *

After, with no light burning in the room but the night light that Danny had brought with him from his room, she lay in the crook of his arm, feeling deliciously at peace. She found it hard to believe they could be sharing the Overlook with a murderous stowaway.

"Jack?"

"Hummm?"

"What got at him?"

He didn't answer her directly. He does have something. Something to eat, he rests on his side, missing. The most of us, he's paranoid. And maybe the Overlook has something to do."

"Chusis?"

"I don't know. Not really. A German Jack would serve that sort

sure. More like the residues of the feelings of the people who have stayed here. Good things and bad things. In that sense I suppose that every big hotel has got its ghosts. Especially the old ones."

But a dead woman in the tub. Jack, he's not losing his mind, is he?"

He gave her a brief squeeze. "We know he goes into trances. I want of a better word. . . from time to time. We know that when he's in them he sometimes sees? . . . things he doesn't understand. If precognitive trances are possible, they're probably functions of the subconscious mind. Freud said that the subconscious never speaks to us in literal language. Only in symbols. If you dream about being in a bakery where no one speaks English, you may be worried about your ability to support your family. Or maybe just that no one understands you. I've read that the falling dream is a standard outlet for feelings of inadequacy. Games, like games. Conscious on one side of the net, subconscious on the other, serving some cockamamie image back and forth. Same with men and madness, with hunches, all of that. Why should precognition be any different? Maybe Dan is really did see blood all over the walls of the Presidential Suite. To a kid his age, the image of blood and the concept of death are nearly interchangeable. To him, the image is a way more accessible than the concept, anyway. William Collins Williams knew that he was a pedophilia. When we grow up, or perhaps gradually get older, and we leave the images to the poets . . . and I'm just rambling on."

"I like to hear you ramble."

"She said it looks like she said. You all heard it."

"The marks on his neck, Jack. Those are real."

"Yes."

There was nothing else for a long time. She had begun to think he must have gone to sleep and he was . . . going to a drawer beside her. I when he said

"I can think of two explanations. For one. And neither of them is a fourth party in the hotel."

"What?" She came up on one elbow.

"Stigmata, maybe," he said.

"Stigmata. Not that when people bleed on Good Friday or something?"

"Yes. Sometimes people who believe deeply in Christ do that."

ext but bleeding marks on their hands and feet during the Holy Week. It was more common in the Middle Ages than now. In those days such people were considered blessed by God. I don't think the Catholic Church proclaimed any of it as out-and-out miracles. Which was pretty smart of them. Sigmund isn't much different from some of the things the yogis can do. I's better understand now, that's all. The people who understand the interaction between the mind and the body—study it. I mean, no one understands it—believe we have a lot more control over our involuntary functions than they used to think. You can slow your heartbeat if you think about it enough. Speed up your own metabolism. Make yourself sweat more. Or make yourself bleed."

"You think Danny *thought* those bruises onto his neck? Jack, I just can't believe that."

"I can believe it's possible, although it seems unlikely to me now. What's more likely is that he did it to himself."

To himself?

"He's gone into these 'trances' and hurt himself in the past. Do you remember the time at the supper table? About two years ago, I think. We were super-pissed at each other. Nobody talking very much. Then, all at once, his eyes rolled up in his head and he went face-first into his dinner. Then onto the floor. Remember?"

"Yes," she said. "I sure do. I thought he was having a convulsion."

"Another time we were in the park," he said. "Just Danny and I. Saturday afternoon. He was sitting on a swing, coasting back and forth. He collapsed onto the ground. It was like he'd been shot. I ran over and picked him up and all of a sudden he just came around. He sort of blinked at me and said, 'I hurt my tummy. Tell Mommy to close the bedroom windows if it rains. And last night it rained like hell.'"

"Yes, but—"

"And he's always coming in with cuts and scraped elbows. His shins look like a battlefield in distress. And when you ask him how he got this one or that one, he just says 'Oh, I was playing, and that's the end of it.'"

"Jack, all kids get bumped and bruised up. With little boys it's almost constant from the time they learn to walk until they're twelve or thirteen."

"And I'm sure Danny gets his share," Jack responded. "He's an

we're guessing. We don't have any idea when he might turn a corner and run into one of those damn police one-room horror movies, whatever they are. We have to get him away. She opened a door in the darkness. Next thing we'll be seeing things."

Don't talk nonsense, he said, and in the darkness of the room he saw the hedgehogs hatching around the path, no longer flanking it but guarding it, hungry November lions. Cold sweat sprang out on his brow.

You didn't really see anything, did you? she was asking. "I mean when you went up to that room. You didn't see anything?"

The lions were gone. Now he saw a pink pastel shower curtain with a dark shape lounging behind it. The closed door. That muffled, turned hump, and sounds after it that might have been running footsteps. The horrible, arching beat of his own heart as he struggled with the passkey.

Nothing, he said, and that was true. He had been struggling, not sure of what was happening. He hadn't had a chance to sift through his thoughts for a reasonable explanation concerning the bruises on his son's neck. He had been pretty damn suggestible himself. Hallucinations could sometimes be catching.

And you haven't calmed your mind? About the snowmobile, I mean?

His hands clamped into sudden tight fists.

(Stop nagging me!)

by his sides. "I said I would, didn't I? I will. Now go to sleep. It's been a long hard day."

"And how?" she said. There was a rustle of bedclothes as she turned toward him and kissed his shoulder. "I love you, Jack."

"I love you too," he said, but he was only mouthing the words. His hands were still clenched into fists. They felt like rocks in the crooks of his arms. The pulse beat prominently on his forehead. She hadn't said a word about what was going to happen to them *after* they got down, when the party was over. Not one word. It had been Danny this and Danny that and Jack I'm so scared. Oh yes, she was scared of a lot of closet bogeymen and jumping shadows, plenty scared. But there was no lack of real ones, either. When they got down to Jewminger they would arrive with sixty dollars and the clockes they stood up in. Not even a car. Even if

[illegible]

But he had begun to trickle down from his palms. "Yes," he said. "Yes. He was not a bad savant at all. He was a good man. His wife was asked beside him why not? There were no problems. He had

agreed to take a small Dairy wagon and to take the
 a horse and rider, and to see that the horse and rider
 thing to do would be to—

(Acid Test)

[illegible][illegible]

The better part of his emotions was broken. He got out of bed and went across to the boy, feeling sick and ashamed of himself. It was Danny he had to think of, not Wendy, not himself. Only Danny. And no matter what shape he wrestled the facts into, he knew in his heart that Danny must be taken out. He stooped over the boy's head, and, as he gazed up from the top of the bed, Danny had quailed again now, back touched by a strong, old man's (what monster's) capering just behind that huge, golden eye?

and then it warm but not very so. And he was sitting peacefully again. Quest.

He got back the head and neck and I cut him

I was so afraid that things would turn out this way that Jack seemed to shake them. They hadn't been able to shake it by coming up here after all. By the time they arrived in Snowdon tomorrow afternoon, the golden opportunity would have evaporated gone the way of the blue suede shoe as an intimate friend of his had been wont to say. Consider the difference if they didn't go down if they could somehow stick it out. The play would get finished. One way or the other, he would tack an ending on it.

His own uncertainty about his characters might add an appealing touch of ambiguity to his original ending. Perhaps it would even make him sure more—it was impossible. Even lacking his Aunt, might well convince the Sovington Board to release him. He would be a pro of course, maybe for as long as three years, but if he could stay sober and keep writing, he might not have to stay at Sovington for three years. Of course he hadn't even made for Sovington before, he had to stuffed, buried alive, but that had been an immature reaction. Furthermore, how much could a man enjoy teaching when he went through his first three classes with a skull-busting hangover every second or third day? It wouldn't be that way again. He would be able to handle his responsibilities much better. He was sure of it.

Somewhere in the midst of that thought things began to break up and he drifted down into sleep. His last thought followed him down like a sounding bell.

It seemed that he might be able to find peace here. At last. If they would only let him.

* * *

When he woke up he was standing in the bathroom of 27.

He'd been walking in my sleep again—why?—no radios to break up here.)

The bathroom light was on. The room bound him in darkness. The shower curtain was drawn around the long clawfooted tub. The bathmat beside it was wrinkled and wet.

He began to feel afraid, but the very dreamlike quality of his fear told him this was not real. Yet that could not contain the fear. So many things at the Overlook seemed like dreams.

He moved across the floor to the tub, not wanting to but helpless to turn his feet back.

He flung the curtain open.

Lying in the tub, naked, looking almost weightless in the water, was George Hatfield, a knife stuck in his chest. The water around him was stained a bright pink. George's eyes were closed. His penis floated amply, like kelp.

George—" he heard himself say

At the word, George's eyes snapped open. They were silver, not human eyes at all. George's hands, fish-white, found the sides of

the cloth and he pulled himself up to a sitting position. The knife stuck straight into front of his chest, equidistant of the pectoral nipples. The wound was apless.

You set the timer ahead, I've never heard George tell him.

"No, George, I didn't, I—"

"I don't stutter."

George was standing now, staring him with unflinching eyes. Every arm, back, mouth had grown back in a dead, frozen, grinning smile. He drew one leg over the porch and sat on the cloth. One wrist and one ankle took place and sat on the hassid mat.

First you tried to run me over on my back and then you set the timer ahead and then you tried to stab me to death but *I st I don't stutter*. George was coming for him, his hands out, the fingers slightly curled. He smelled moldy and wet like leaves that had been rained on.

"It was for your own good," Jack said, bucking up. "I set it ahead for your own good. For harmony. I happen to know you cheated on your I Ching compass."

"I don't cheat . . . and I don't stutter."

George's hands touched his neck.

Jack turned and ran, ran with the floating, weightless slowness that is so common to dreams.

"You did. You did cheat!" he screamed in fear and anger as he crossed, he darkened behind the room. "I'll prove it."

George's hands were on his neck again. Jack's heart swelled with fear until he was sure it would burst. And then, as his hands curled around the doorknob and it turned under his hand and he yanked the door open, he plunged out, not into the second-floor hallway but into the basement room beyond the arch. The crotchety light was on the campfire stack and geometrical, stood beneath it. And all around it was a miniature mountain range of boxes and crates and banded bundles of records and invoices and God knew what. Relief surged through him.

"I'll find it!" he heard himself screaming. He seized a damp and moldering cardboard box, split it apart in his hands, spilling out a waterfall of yellow films. "I'm here somewhere! *I will find it!*" He plunged his hands deep into the pile of papers and came up with a dry, papery wasp's nest in one hand and a timer in the other. The timer was ticking. A, ached on its back was a length of

electrical cord attached to the other end of the cord was a bundle of dynamite. *Here*," he screamed. *Here take it!"*

His effort became a futile triumph. He had done more than escape George; he had conquered. With these a smothered object in his hands, George would never touch him again. George would flee in terror.

He began to think he could confront George, and that was when George's hand seized a round his neck, squeezing, stopping his breath, damping up his respiration entirely after one final dragging gasp.

I don't like it! whispered George from behind him.

He dropped the wasps' nest and wasps boiled out of it in a furious brown and yellow wave. His lungs were on fire. His wavering sight fell on the mat and the sense of triumph returned, along with a cresting wave of righteous wrath. Instead of connecting the liner to dynamite, the cord ran to the good knob of a stout black cane, like the one his father had carried after he accented with the milk truck.

He grasped it and the cord parted. The cane felt heavy and right in his hands. He swung it back over his shoulder. On the way up it glanced against the wire from which the light bulb depended and the light began to swing back and forth making the room's hooded shadows rock monstrously against the floor and walls. On the way down the cane struck something much harder. George screamed. The grip on Jack's throat loosened.

He tore free of George's grip and whirled. George was on his knees, his head drooping, his hands clasped together on top of it. Blood welled through his fingers.

"Please," George whispered humbly. "Give me a break, Mr. Torrance."

"Now you'll take your medicine." Jack grinned. "Now by God, won't you. Young pup. Young worthless car. Now by God, right now. Every drop. Every single damn drop!"

As the light swayed above him and the shadows danced and flapped, he began to swing the cane, bringing it down again and again, his arm rising and falling like a machine. George's bloody protecting fingers fell away from his head and Jack brought the cane down again and again, and on his neck and shoulders and back and arms. Except that the cane was no longer precisely a cane, it seemed to be a mallet with some kind of brightly striped

handle. A mallet with a hard side and soft side. The business end was clotted with blood and hair. And the flat, whacking sound of the mallet against flesh had been replaced with a hollow booming sound, echoing and reverberating. His own voice had taken on this same quavering, bellying, disembodied. And yet, paradoxically, it sounded weaker, slurred, petulant . . . as if he were drunk.

The figure on its knees slowly raised its head, as if in supplication. There was not a face precisely, but only a mask of blood through which eyes peered. He brought the mallet back for a final whistling downstroke and it was fully launched before he saw that the supplicating face below him was not George's but Danny's. It was the face of his son.

"Daddy—"

And then the mallet crashed home, striking Danny right between the eyes, closing them forever. And some being somewhere seemed to be laughing—

(/ No /)

* * *

He came out of it standing naked over Danny's bed, his hands empty, his body sheened with sweat. His final screams had only been in his mind. He voiced it again, this time in a whisper.

"No, No, Danny. Never."

He went back to bed on legs that had turned to rubber. Wendy was sleeping deeply, the clock on the nightstand said it was quarter to five. He lay sleepless until seven, when Danny began to stir awake. Then he put his legs over the edge of the bed and began to dress. It was time to go downstairs and check the boiler.

THE SNOWMOBILE

Some time after midnight, while they all slept peacefully, the snow had stopped after dumping a fresh eight inches on the old crust. The clouds had broken, a fresh wind had swept them away, and

... a black sand in the vicinity of summit which stained his clothing. By window side of the cabin a side of the equipment, had

[illegible][illegible]

He washed his hands, stepping over an old fire bucket which had once sat beneath the end of the bare rock on which was a heavy corner and a pair of J. C. Perry's underwear, and between them. He stepped once more, with a footed shoe, out of the front rack and held it up in front of his face, looking at it without any change of expression.

[illegible]

(55/1250)

Die Funktion f ist in \mathbb{R}^n definiert durch $f(x) = \frac{1}{2} \|x\|^2$. Berechnen Sie die Hesse-Matrix von f in $x = 0$.

game at that. The male expressed that perfectly. A soft end and a hard end. A game of finesse and art, and a game of raw, budget-eating power.

He swore he had ~~been~~ through ~~the~~ ~~air~~ ~~when~~ ~~he~~ ~~was~~ ~~born~~. He saw a ball at the point where ~~the~~ ~~gun~~ ~~had~~ ~~been~~ ~~made~~. Then he reached for the rack and turned to his left. What he saw there made him frown again.

The snowmobile sat almost in the middle of the equipment shed a shiny new one and I took it in for its lucky charm. *Bamburster Skides* was written on the side of the engine cowling facing him in black letters which had been taken backward, presumably to confuse spectators. The protruding skis were also black. There was black piping to the right and left of the cowling, where they would be racing skiers on a sports car. Butcher and I painted it with a bright, snoring yellow and that was what he didn't like about it. Sitting there in its snarled morning nap, yellow body and black piping, black skis and black sphinctered open crank, it looked like a monstrous mechanized wisp. When it was running it would sound like that too. Whining and buzzing and ready to sing. But then what else should it look like? I wasn't big under tank covers, at least. Because after all, had one as big as they were going to be hurting plenty. All of them. Bumping the Terrance tumbler would be hurting so bad you'd want what these were hitting. Jerry's hand would look like a mother's kisses.

He pulled his handkerchief from his back pocket, wiped his mouth with it, and walked over to the Skidoo. He stood looking down at it the frozen very deep snow and studied his handkerchief back into his pocket. Outside a sudden gust of wind slammed against the equipment shed, making it rock and creak. He looked out the window and saw the post carrier in front of him spat up snow crystals toward the ground in front of him and waving them high into the hard blue sky.

[illegible]

break. They were perhaps the final grotesque toy of the unwinding fossil fuel age, given to ten-year-olds for Christmas.

He remembered a newspaper article he had read in *St. Vinton*, a story daubed someplace in Maine. A kid on a snowmobile, hurtling up a road he'd never traveled before at better than thirty miles an hour. Night. His headlight off. There had been a heavy chain strung between two posts with a NO TRESPASSING sign hung from the middle. They said that in all probability he'd never saw it. The moon might have gone behind a cloud. The chain had decapitated him. Reading the story Jack had been almost glad, and now, looking down at this machine, the feeling returned.

If it wasn't for Danny, I would take great pleasure in grabbing one of those machines, opening the cowl, and just pounding until.

He let his pen up break escape him in a long slow sigh. Wendy was right. Come hell, high water, or the welfare line. Wendy was right. Pounding this machine to death would be the height of folly, no matter how pleasant an aspect that folly made. It would almost be tantamount to pounding his own son to death.

"Fucking Luddite," he said aloud.

He went to the back of the machine and unscrewed the gascap. He found a dipstick on one of the shelves that ran at chest-height around the walls and sipped it in. The last eighth of an inch came out wet. Not very much, but enough to see if the damn thing would run. Later he could siphon more from the Vicks and the hotel truck.

He screwed the cap back on and opened the cowl. No spark plugs, no battery. He went to the shelf again and began to poke along it, pushing aside screwdrivers and adjustable wrenches, a carburetor that had been taken out of an old lawn mower, plastic boxes of screws and nails and bits of varying sizes. The shelf was slick and dark with old grease, and the years were laid out in dust, past stuck to make fur. He didn't like touching it.

He found a small, stained box with the abbreviation S&W acronically marked on it in pencil. He shook it and something rattled inside. Plugs. He held one of them up to the light, trying to see inside the gap without running around for the gapping tool.

Fuck it, he thought resentfully, and dropped the plug back into the box. If the gaps wrong, that's just too damn bad. Tough fackin' titty.

There was a stool behind the door. He dragged it over, sat down, and installed the four sparkplugs, then fitted the small rubber caps over each. That done, he let his fingers play briefly over the magneto. They laughed when I sat down at the piano.

Back to the shelves. This time he couldn't find what he wanted, a small battery. A three- or four-cell. There were socket wrenches, a case filled with drills and drillbits, bags of lawn fertilizer and Vigoro for the flower beds, but no snowmobile battery. It didn't bother him in the slightest. In fact, it made him feel glad. He was relieved. I did my best, Captain, but I could not get through. That's fine, son. I'm going to put you in for the Silver Star and the Purple Star, too. You're a credit to your regiment. Thank you, sir. I did try.

He began to whistle "Red River Valley" in tempo, as he poked along the last two or three feet of shelf. The notes came out in little puffs of white smoke. He had made a corner, the end of the shed and the thing wasn't there. Maybe somebody had stolen it. Maybe Watson had. He laughed aloud. The old office burlesque trick. A few paperclips, a couple of reams of paper, nobody will miss this white chair or this Golden Regal place setting. . . . and what about this fine snowmobile battery? Yes, that might come in handy. Toss it in the sack. Wherever far come, Baby. Everybody has sticky fingers. Under-the-jacket discount, we used to call it when we were kids.

He walked back to the snowmobile and gave the side of it a good healthy kick as he went by. Well, that was the end of it. He would just have to tell Wendy sorry, baby, but . . .

There was a box sitting in the corner by the door. The side panel had been lying over it. Written on the top in pencil was the observation *Skid*.

He looked at it, the smile drying up on his lips. Look, sir, the cavalry. Look, the your smoke signals must have worked after all.

It wasn't fair.

Goddamn it, it just wasn't fair.

Sir, not to go. Luck, fair providence—the being wrong to have

him. Some niter luck, white luck. And at the last moment bad old Jack Torrance luck had stepped back in. The lousy run of cards wasn't over yet.

Kelso men, a gray, sudden wave of it, passed up his throat. His hands had caught him once again.

(Not fair, goddammit, not fair.)

Why couldn't he have looked someplace else? Anyplace. Why hadn't he had a crick in his neck or a splinter in his nose or a red neck to bank? Just one of those little things. He never would have seen it.

Well, he hadn't. That was all. It was an hallucination, no different from what had happened yesterday outside that room on the second floor or the goddam hedge menagerie. A momentary strain that was all. Fancy, I thought I saw a snowjob in the battery in that corner. Nothing here now. Combat fatigue, I guess, sir. Sorry. Keep your pecker up, son. It happens to us all sooner or later.

He yanked the door open almost hard enough to snap the hinges and pulled his snowshoes inside. They were clogged with snow and he slapped them down hard enough on the floor to raise a cloud of it. He put his left foot on the left shoe and paused.

Danny was out here by the niter platform. Trying to make a snowman, by the looks. No much luck, the snow was too cold to stick together. Still, he was giving it the old college try, or there in the flashing morning, a speck of a bundled-up boy above the brilliant snow and below the brilliant sky. Wearing his hat around around backward like Carlton Fiske.

(In that, in the name of God were you thinking of?)

The answer came back with no pause.

(Me. I was thinking of me.)

He suddenly remembered lying in bed the night before, vivid there with suddeny he had been contemplating the murder of his wife.

For a instant, kneeling there, everything came clear to him. It was not this Danny, the Overlook was working on. It was working on him too. I wasn't Danny who was he working on? I was him. He was so vulnerable, the new white, the beautiful, was it until something snapped.

(until I let go and sleep, and when I do that if I do that)

He looked up at the banks of windows and he saw, threw back
in a new, bounding glare from their many paned surfaces but he
did not answer. For the first time he noticed how much they
seemed to glow, how life-like. Now he saw and heard he was
certainly a part of it. Was it not so, they were looking at him was
they.

[illegible]

brow, the fine nose, the compassionate lips. Looking at Jacky Terrace what had only been a meaningless sprawl had suddenly been transformed into a stark black-and-white echoing of the face of Christ-Our-Lord. Fearful wonder became terror. He had cussed in front of a picture of Jesus. He would be damned. He would be in hell with the sinners. The face of Christ had been in the picture all along. All along.

Now, kneeling in the sun and watching his son playing in the shadow of the hotel he knew that it was all true. The hotel wanted Danny, maybe all of them but Danny for sure. The hedges had really walked. There was a dead woman in 217, a woman that was perhaps only a spirit and harmless under most circumstances but a woman who was now an active danger. Like some malevolent clockwork toy she had been wound up and set in motion by Danny's own odd mind . . . and his own. Had it been Watson who had tried to jam a man had tripped dead—a stroke one up on the rogue court? Or had it been Lefman? I didn't matter. There had been an assassination on the third floor. How many old quarrels, snatches, strokes? How many murders? Was Chaucer lurking somewhere in the West wing with his axe, just waiting for Danny to start him up so he could come back out of the woodwork.

The pulled wire of bruises around Danny's neck.

The walking, half seen bottles in the deserted lounge.

The radio.

The dreams.

The scrapbook he had found in the cellar.

(Medea, are you here. I've been sleeping again my dear . . .)

He got up suddenly, brushing the snatches back out of the door. He was shaking a fever. He slammed the door and picked up the box with the battery in it. It slipped through his shaking fingers.

(oh christ what if I cracked it)

and thumped over on his side. He pulled the flaps of the carton open and yanked the battery out, needless of him that might be leaking through the battery's casing—it had cracked. But it hadn't. It was whole. A little sign escaped his lips.

Cradling it he looked over to the Skidoo as a platform—a platform near the front of the engine. He found a small adjustable

wrench on one of the shelves and unlocked the battery caddy quickly and with no trouble. The battery was use, no need to use the charger for it. There had been a stack of caddy and a small order of change when he applied the positive cable to its terminal. The job done, he stood away wiping his hands nervously on his faded denim jacket. There I stood a while. No reason why not. No reason at all except that it was part of the Overlook and the Overlook really didn't want them out of here. Not at all. The Overlook was having the best of a good time. There was a little boy, a terrorized man and his woman to set one against the other, and if it played its cards right, they could end up hitting through the Overlook's half-lit, insubstantial shades in a *Society*, Jackson novel, whoever walked in Hill House walked alone, but you wouldn't be alone in the Overlook, oh no, there would be plenty of company here. But there was really no reason why he shouldn't be showing for a while. Except in course.

Except he still didn't read with a light.

yes, except for that.

He stood looking at the Skimmer, his head bobbing out in frozen, automatic. He wanted it to be he way it had been. When he had seen it there he had no doubts. George drew a and he the wrong decision he had known the time. We may was only scared of the homophony summarized up by a single hysterical. The boy. Now, suddenly, he could see her safe. I was like his play, his damn name play. He no longer knew which side he was in, or how things should come out. Once you saw the face of a god in the painted blacks and whites, it was everybody out of the picture. You could never unsee it. Others might laugh and say it's nothing, just a lot of splotches with no meaning, give me a good old Cratch master part by the millions any day, but you would always see the face of Christ-Our Lord looking at you. You had seen it as one gasp a leap, the conscious and unconscious melting in that core shocking moment of understanding. You would always see it. You were damned to always see it.

I've been creepwalking again, my dear. . . .

It had been all right until he had seen Danny playing in the snow. It was Danny's fault. Everything had been Danny's fault. He was the one with the shining, or whatever it was. I wasn't a

she said. "I was here. I could hear you hear me. I could have passed in with you easily. I planned to do so. But the beam."

Don't want to leave. ?Can it?

"I've looked at it with a telescope and he said it was together. Not even. Empty. My heart was ached. I know relations are like rock, large and heavy. But now I know it was how picked him. He is Boswell. You say the new case under winter. Very good, sign him on. Take we into our side. It is given of the winter and is seen. You know, however. We don't want him to be distracted. We don't."

He was standing by the snowmobile's cockpit, his head staring at the light again. What did it come down to? Can't stay. Very simple. Keep a simple. She will go or she will stay.

"I will go. How long will it be before you find the local? I will see you?" a voice inside him asked. The dark place with the heavy door. A vast unshaven and unempty you must see. He lay watching game shows on where the police and men's rooms. There is a thousand years old and there is always a second one. But arriving in the time bow? When the door is thirty years old glass and you eat it with salt and the skidoo is loaded with seventy country codes?

How long, Christ, he was so afraid it would not be long at all.

"I can't wait," he said very softly. That was it. It was like trying to play solitaire with one of the aces missing from the deck.

Abruptly he leaned over the skidoo's motor compartment and yanked off the magnet. It came off with a popping ease. He looked at it for a moment, but when the equipment shelves back door and opened it.

From here the view of the mountains was unobstructed, picturesque and beautiful in the twinkling brightness of morning. An unbroken field of snow rose to the first pines about a mile distant. He flung the magnet as far out into the snow as he could. It went much farther than it should have. There was a light puff of snow when it hit. The light breeze carried the snow grains away to fresh resting places. Disperse there, I say. There's nothing to see. It's all over. Disperse.

He felt at peace.

He stood in the doorway for a long time, breathing the good mountain air, and then he closed it firmly and went back out the other door to tell Wendy they would be staying. On the way, he stopped and had a somewhat fight with Danny.

34

THE HEDGES

It was November 29, three days after Thanksgiving. The last week had been a good one, the Thanksgiving dinner the best they'd ever had as a family. Wendy had cooked Dick Haborann's turkey to a turn and they had all eaten so bursting without even coming close to denigrating the holy bird. Jack had groaned that they would be eating turkey for the rest of the winter—creamed turkey, turkey sandwiches, turkey and noodles, turkey surprise.

No, Wendy told him with a little smile. Only until Christmas. Then we have the capon.

Jack and Danny groaned together.

The bruises on Danny's neck had faded, and his fears seemed to have faded with them. On Thanksgiving afternoon Wendy had been putting Danny around on his sled while Jack worked on the play, which was now almost done.

"Are you still afraid, doc?" she had asked, not knowing how to put the question less baldly.

"Yes," he answered simply. "But now I stay in the safe places."

"Your daddy says that sooner or later the forest rangers will wonder why we're not checking in on the CB radio. They'll come to see if anything's wrong. We might go down then. You and I. And let your daddy finish the winter. He has good reasons for wanting to. In a way, doc . . . I know that's hard for you to understand, but our backs are against the wall."

"Yes," he had answered noncommittally.

On this sparkling afternoon the two of them were upstairs, and Danny knew that they had been making love. They were making love now. They were happy, he knew. His mother was still a little bit

twist of ankle that shook the powdery snow from the airings last before the boot came back down—and all that remained was for him to haul up the necessary muscles in his legs and calves and ankles. Danny found that his ankles got red, he wasn't wearing shoes, so the snow was almost as hard on your ankles as skating, because you had to keep catching the airings. Every five minutes or so he had to stop with his legs spread and the snow shoe flat on the snow to rest them.

But he didn't have to rest on his way down to the playground because it was a landslide. Less than ten minutes after he struggled up and over the monstrous snow-dune that had drifted in on the Overlook's front porch he was standing with his matted hair on the playground slide. He wasn't even breathing hard.

The playground seemed much nicer in the deep snow than it ever had during the autumn. It looked like a fairyland sculpture. The swing chains had been frozen in strange positions, the seats of the big kids' swings resting flush against the snow. The jungle gym was an ice-cave guarded by dripping icicle teeth. Only the cement-nets of the play-overlook stuck up over the snow.

Wish the other one was buried that way, only not with us in it, and the tips of the cement rings protruded in two places like Eskimo igloos. Danny tramped over there, squatted, and began to dig. Before long he had uncovered the dark mouth of one of them and he slipped into the cold tunnel. In his mind he was Patrick McGowan, the Secret Agent Man (he had seen the reruns of that program twice on the Barington TV channel, and his daddy never missed them; he would skip a party to stay home and watch "Secret Agent" or "The Avengers," and Danny had always watched with him), on the run from KGB agents in the mountains of Switzerland. There had been avalanches in the area and the notorious KGB agent Slobbo had killed his girlfriend with a poison dart, but somewhere near was the Russian anti-gravity machine. Perhaps at the end of this very tunnel. He drew a sharp intake and went along the concrete tunnel, his eyes wide and alert, his breath pluming out.

The far end of the concrete ring was already blocked with snow. He tried digging through it and was amazed (and a little uneasy) to see how solid it was, almost like ice from the cold and the constant weight of more snow on top of it.

His make believe game collapsed around him and he was suddenly aware that he felt closed in and extremely nervous in this tight ring of cement. He could hear his breathing; it sounded dank and quick and hollow. He was under the snow, and hardly any light filtered down. He knew he had dug to get in here. Suddenly he wanted to be out in the sunlight more than anything. Suddenly he remembered his daddy and mommy were sleeping and didn't know where he was, that if the hole he dug caved in he would be trapped, and the Overlook didn't like him.

Danny got turned around with some difficulty and crawled back along the length of the concrete ring, his snowshoes clacking woodenly together behind him, his palms crackling in last fall's dead aspen leaves beneath him. He had just reached the end and the cold spilt of light coming down from above when the snow *did* give in—a minor fall, but enough to powder his face and clog the opening he had wriggled down through and leave him in darkness.

For a moment his brain froze in utter panic and he could not think. Then, as if from far off, he heard his daddy telling him that he must never play at the Sioyington dump, because sometimes stupid people hauled old refrigerators off to the dump without removing the doors and if you got in one and the door happened to shut on you, there was no way to get out. You would die in the darkness.

(You wouldn't want a thing like that to happen to you, would you, doc?)

(No, Daddy.)

But it *had* happened, his frenzied mind told him. It *had* happened, he was in the dark, he was closed in, and it was as cold as a refrigerator. And—

(*Something is in here with me.*)

His breath stopped in a gasp. An almost drowsy terror stole through his veins. Yes. Yes. There was something in here with him, some awful thing the Overlook had saved for just such a chance as this. Maybe a huge spider that had burrowed down under the dead leaves, or a rat—or maybe the corpse of some little kid that had died here on the playground. Had that ever happened? Yes, he thought, maybe it had. He thought of the woman in the tub. The blood and brains on the wall of the Presidential

Sweet. Of your little kid. Its head split open from a fall from the monkey bars or a swing, crawling after you in the dark, gnawing, looking for one final playmate. It is endless. A ground. Forever. Is a moment he would like to escape.

At the far end of the concrete ring Danny heard the steady crackle of dead leaves as something came for him on its hands and knees. A tiny mouse, he would feel its cold hands close over his ankles—

That thought broke his paralysis. He was digging at the loose fall of snow that choked the end of the concrete ring, throwing it back between his legs in powdery bursts like a dog digging for a bone. Blue light filtered down from above and Danny thrust himself up at it like a diver coming out of deep water. He scraped his back on the lip of the concrete ring. One of his snowshoes twisted behind the other. Snow spilled down inside his ski mask and into the collar of his parka. He dug at the snow, clawed at it. It seemed to be trying to hold him, to suck him back down back into the concrete ring where that unseen, leaf-cracking thing was, and keep him there. Forever.

Then he was out, his face was turned up to the sun, and he was crawling through the snow, crawling away from the half-buried cement ring gasping harshly, his face a mix comically white with powdered snow—a living fright mask. He hobbled over to the jungle gym and sat down to readjust his snowshoes and get his breath. As he set them to rights and tightened the straps again he never took his eyes from the hole at the end of the concrete ring. He waited to see if something would come out. Nothing did, and after three or four minutes, Danny's breathing began to slow down. Whatever it was, it couldn't stand the sunlight. It was cooped up down there, maybe only able to come out when it was dark—or when both ends of its caved-in prison were plugged with snow.

(That I'm safe now I'm safe I'm going back because now I'm)
Something humped slowly behind him.

He turned around, toward the hole and looked. But even before he looked

(Can you see the Indians in this picture?)

he knew what he would see because he knew what that soft

... and a bomb law the kind of a large explosion
... the way ... when ... of the
hotel and fell to the ground.

(Can you see—?)

Yes, he could. I knew how much he enjoyed the
candy, so I gave him a handful. On top of some candy the
floor spread. Now it's his reward. An enormous splash of
green paint. He's watching me. He's watching me. He's
begging sweet or a scrap.

But this time he wouldn't go crazy. He wouldn't blow his head because at least he wasn't trapped in some dark cave here. He was at the sunlight. And it was just a dog. It's pretty warm out today, he thought hopefully. Maybe the sun had melted enough in water to let him go so he rest felt it in a bunch. Maybe that's all it is.

(140N 1 gtr near that place 2 per night 5:44P)

His snow-bird bindings were as tight as they were ever going to be. He stood up and stared back at the creature rising almost imperceptibly submerged in the snow and what he saw at the end he had expected to freeze his heart. There was a circular patch of darkness at the end of a road of shadow that marked the hole he a dog had got down inside. Now in spite of the snow Gatsby, he thought he could see something there. Something moving. A hand. The waving hand of some desperate unhappy child waving hand pleading hand, drowning hand.

(Save me O please save me If you can, save me at least come
play with me Forever And Forever And Forever)

"No," Danny whispered harshly. The word felt dry and bare from his mouth, which was stripped of moisture. He could feel his mind wavering now, trying to go away the way it had when the woman in the room had . . . no, he *never* got that far.

He grasped at the strings of reality and held them tightly. He had to get out of here. Concentrate on that. Be calm. Be like the Secret Agent Man. Would Patrick McGowan be crying and peeing on his pants like a little baby?

Would his daddy?

That calmed him somewhat.

From behind him, that soft *thump* sound of falling snow came again. He turned around and the head of one of the hedge hogs was sticking out of the snow now, snarling at him. It was ~~lower~~ *higher* than it should have been, almost up to the gate of the playground.

Terror tried to rise up and he quelled it. He was the Secret Agent Man, and he would escape.

He began to walk out of the playground, taking the same roundabout course his father had taken on the day that the snow flew. He concentrated on operating the snowshoes. Slow. Let slides. Don't lift your foot too high or you'll lose your balance. Twist your ankle and spit the snow off the crisscrossed surfaces. It seemed so slow. He reached the corner of the playground. The snow was drifted high here and he was able to step over the fence. He got halfway over and then almost fell flat when the snowshoe on his behind foot caught on one of the fence posts. He leaned on the outside edge of gravity, pivoting his arms, remembering how hard it was to get up once you fell down.

From his right, that soft sound again, falling clumps of snow. He looked over and saw the other two notes, clear of snow now down to their forepaws, side by side about sixty paces away. The green garden notes that were their eyes were fixed on him. The dog had turned its head.

(Only happens when we're not looking.)

"Oh, Hey—"

His snowshoes had crossed and he plunged forward into the snow, arms waving uselessly. More snow got inside his hood and down his neck and into the tops of his boots. He struggled out of the snow and tried to get the snowshoes under him, heart hammering crazily now.

(Secret Agent Man remember you're the Secret Agent.)

and overbalanced backwards. For a moment he lay there looking at the sky, thinking it would be simpler to just give up.

Then he thought of the thing in the concrete tunnel and knew he could not. He gripped his feet and started over at the top again. All three lions were bunched together now, not forty feet away. The dog had ranged off to her left as if to block Danny's retreat. They were bare of snow except for powderiness around their necks and muzzles. They were all staring at him.

His breath was racing now and the panic was like a fire behind his forehead, wisping and growling. He fought the snowshoes.

(Daddy's rule No don't fight on our Walk on them like they're your own feet. Walk with them.)

(Yes, Daddy.)

He began to walk again trying to regain the easy rhythm he had practiced with his daddy. Little by little it began to come but with the rhythm came an awareness of just how tired he was, how much his fear had exhausted him. The tendons of his thighs and calves and ankles were hot and trembly. Ahead he could see the Overlook, mockingly distant, seeming to stare at him with its many windows as if it was some sort of contest in which it was mildly interested.

Danny looked back over his shoulder and his hurried breathing caught for a moment and then hurried on even faster. The nearest lion was now only twenty feet behind, breasting through the snow like a dog paddling in a pond. The two others were to its right and left pacing it. They were like an army platoon on patrol, the dog, stiff off to their left the scout. The closest lion had its head down. The shoulders bunched powerfully above its neck. The tail was up as if in the instant before it had turned to look it had been swishing back and forth back and forth. He thought it looked like a big dog housecat. It was having a good time playing with a mouse before killing it.

(*Young—*)

No, if he felt he was dead. They would never let him get up. They would pounce. He powdered his ankles madly and lunged ahead, his center of gravity dancing just beyond his nose. He caught a lion hurried on, snapping glances back over his shoulder. The air whistled in and out of his dry throat like hot glass.

The world closed down to the dazzling snow, the green tigers, and the whispery sound of his snowshoes. And something else. A soft muffled padding sound. He tried to hurry faster and couldn't. He was walking over the buried driveway now, a small boy with his face a mass buried in the shadow of his parka hood. The afternoon was still and bright.

When he looked back again the pouncing lion was only five feet behind. It was grinning. Its mouth was open, its hairless tongue down like a whisker. Behind it all the others he could see. The rabbit's head now sticking out of the snow, bright green as a head turned as if to flank and swallow the end of the stick.

Now up the Overlook's road, down between the two far drive and the porch. He let the panic loose and began to run, a clumsy in-

the snowshoes, not daring to look back now, tilting further and further forward, his arms out ahead of him like a blind man feeling for obstacles. His hood fell back, revealing his complexion, pale white giving way to hectic red blotches on his cheeks, his eyes bulging with terror. The porch was very close now.

Behind him he heard the sudden hard crunch of snow as something leaped.

He fell on the porch steps, screaming without sound, and scrambled up them on his hands and knees, snowshoes clattering and askew behind him.

There was a slashing sound in the air and sudden pain in his leg. The ripping sound of cloth. Something else that might have—*must* have—been in his mind.

Howling, angry roar.

Smell of blood and evergreen.

He fell full-length on the porch, sobbing hoarsely, the rich, metallic taste of copper in his mouth. His heart was thundering in his chest. There was a smart trickle of blood coming from his nose.

He had no idea how long he lay there before the lobby doors flew open and Jack ran out wearing just his jeans and a pair of slippers. Wendy was behind him.

"Danny!" she screamed.

"Don't Danny, for Christ's sake! What's wrong? What happened?"

Daddy was helping him up. Below the knee his snowpants were ripped open. Inside, his woollen sock had been ripped open and his calf had been shallowly scratched—as if he had tried to run his way through a closely grown evergreen hedge and the branches had clawed him.

He looked over his shoulder. Far down the lawn, past the putting green, were a number of vague, snow-crowned lamps. The hedge animals. Between him and the playground. Between them and the road.

His legs gave way. Jack caught him. He began to cry.

He looked into the fire and waited for Danny to say something. High yellow flames danced on the dark stone hearth. A pine-knot exploded with a bang and sparks rushed up the flue.

"Danny, come over here." Jack turned around. His face still had that pinched, deathly look. Danny didn't like to look at it.

Jack —

"I just want the boy over here for a minute."

Danny slipped off the sofa and came over beside his daddy.

"Good boy. Now what do you see?"

Danny had known what he would see even before he got to the window. Below the flutter of foot tracks, snow tracks, and snowshoe tracks that marked their usual exercise area, the snowfield that covered the Overlook's lawns sloped down to the trip area and the playground beyond. It was marred by two sets of tracks, one of them in a straight line from the porch to the playground, the other a long looping line coming back up.

"Only my tracks, Daddy. But—"

"What about the heuges, Danny?"

Danny's lips began to tremble. He was going to cry. What if he couldn't stop?

I won't cry I Won't Cry Won't Bunt W ON'T)

"All covered with snow," he whimpered. But, Daddy. "

"What? I couldn't hear you."

"Jack, you're cross-examining him! Can you see he's upset. he —"

"Shot up! Well, Danny?"

"They scratched me, Daddy. My leg. "

"You must have got your leg on the crust of the snow."

Then Wendy was between them, her face pale and angry. "What are you trying to make him do?" she asked him. "Confess a murder? What's wrong with you?"

The strangeness in his eyes seemed to break then. "I'm trying to help him find the difference between something real and something imaginary was only an hallucination that's all." He squatted by Danny so they were on an eye-to-eye level, and then hugged him tight. Danny couldn't really happen. Okay? It was like one of those times you have sometimes. That's all."

"Daddy?"

"What, Dan?"

"I didn't cut my leg on the crust. There isn't any crust. It's all powdery snow. It won't even stick together to make snowballs. Remember we tried to have a snowball fight and couldn't?"

He felt his father stiffen against him. "The porch step, then."

Danny pulled away. Suddenly he had it. It had flashed into his mind all at once, the way things sometimes did, the way it had about the woman wanting to be in that gay man's pants. He stared at his father with widening eyes.

"You know I'm telling the truth," he whispered, shocked.

Danny. "Jack's face, tightening.

"You know because you saw—"

The sound of Jack's open palm striking Danny's face was flat, not dramatic at all. The boy's head rocked back, the palmprint reddening on his cheek like a brand.

Wendy made a moaning noise.

For a moment they were still, the three of them, and then Jack grabbed for his son and said, "Danny I'm sorry you okay now?"

"You hit me, you bastard," Wendy cried. "You dirty bastard."

She grabbed his outer arm and for a moment Danny was pulled between them.

"Oh please stop pulling me!" he screamed at them, and there was such agony in his voice that they both let go of him, and then the tears had to come and he collapsed weeping, between the sofa and the window, his parents staring at him helplessly, the way children might stare at a toy broken in a furious tussle over to whom it belonged. In the fireplace another pine-knot exploded like a hand grenade, making them all jump.

* * *

Wendy gave him baby aspirin and Jack slipped him, unprotesting, between the sheets of his cot. He was asleep in no time with his thumb in his mouth.

"I don't like what she said. It's a regression."

Jack didn't reply.

She looked at him softly without anger without a smile, either. "Do you want me to apologize for calling you a bastard? All right, I apologize. I'm sorry. You saw, so you can't have hit him."

"I know," he muttered. "I know that. I don't know what the hell came over me."

"You promised you'd never hit him again."

He looked at her furiously, and then the fury collapsed. Suddenly, with pity and horror, she saw what Jack would look like as an old man. She had never seen him look that way before.

("What way?")

Defeated, she answered herself. *He looks beaten.*

He said, "I always thought I could keep my promises."

She went to him and put her hands on his arm. "All right, it's over. And when the ranger comes to check us, we'll tell him we all want to go down. All right?"

"All right," Jack said, and at that moment, at least, he meant it. The same way he had always meant it on those mornings after, looking at his pale and haggard face in the bathroom mirror. *I'm going to stop, going to cut it off flat.* But morning gave way to afternoon, and in the afternoons he felt a little better. And afternoon gave way to night. As some great twentieth-century thinker had said, night must fall.

He found himself wishing that Wendy would ask him about the hedges, would ask him what Danny meant when he said *You know because you saw*— If she did, he would tell her everything. Everything. The hedges, the woman in the room, even about the fire hose that seemed to have switched positions. But where did confession stop? Could he tell her he'd thrown the magnets away, that they could all be down in Snowpier right now if he hadn't done that?

What she said was, "Do you want tea?"

"Yes. A cup of tea would be good."

She went to the door and paused there, rubbing her forearms through her sweater. "It's my fault as much as yours," she said. "What were we doing while he was going through that dream, or whatever it was?"

"Wendy—"

"We were sleeping," she said, sleeping like a couple of teenage kids with their teeth nicely scratched.

"Stop it," he said. "It's over."

"No," Wendy answered, and gave him a strange, resolute smile. "It's not over."

She went out to make tea, leaving him to keep watch over their son.

THE ELEVATOR

Jack awoke from a thin and uneasy sleep where huge and ill-defined shapes chased him through endless snowfields to what he first thought was another dream—darkness, and in it, a sudden mechanicalumble of noises—clicks and clanks, hummings, rattlings, snaps and whooshes.

Then Wendy sat up beside him and he knew it was no dream.

"What's that?" Her hand, cold marble, gripped his wrist. He restrained an urge to shake it off—how in the hell was he supposed to know what it was? The illuminated clock on his nightstand said it was five minutes to twelve.

The humming sound again. Loud and steady, varying the slightest bit. Followed by a clank as the humming ceased. A rattling bang. A hump. Then the humming resumed.

It was the elevator.

Danny was sitting up. "Daddy? *Daddy?*" His voice was sleepy and scared.

"Right here, doc," Jack said. "Come on over and jump in. Your mom's awake, too."

The bedclothes rustled as Danny got on the bed between them. "It's the elevator," he whispered.

"That's right," Jack said. "Just the elevator."

"What do you mean, *just*?" Wendy demanded. There was an ice-cream-of-hysteria on her voice. "Is the mouse of the night? *Who's running it?*"

Hummmmmmmmm. Click clank. Above them now. The rattle of the gears accelerating back the hump of the doors opening and closing. Then the hump of the motor and the cables again.

Danny began to whimper.

Jack swung his feet out of bed and onto the floor. "It's probably a short. I'll check."

"Don't you dare go out of this room!"

"Don't be stupid," he said, mufing on his nose. "It's my job." She was out of and herself a moment, breathing Danny's hair.

"Well, go on!"

"Wendy—"

"What's wrong?" Danny asked, suddenly. "What's wrong, Daddy?"

Instead of answering he turned away, his face angry and set. He buttoned his robe around him at the door, opened it, and stepped out into the dark hall.

Wendy hesitated for a moment, and then was actually Danny who began to move first. She caught up quickly, and they went on together.

Jack had bothered with no lights. She fumbled for the switch handle in the four spaced overheads in the hallway, but led in the main corridor. Up ahead, Jack was already turning the corner. This time Danny found the switchplate and flicked all three switches up. The hallway, coming down to the stairs, and the elevator shaft came aight.

Jack was standing at the elevator station, which was flanked by benches and cigarette urns. He was standing motionless in front of the closed elevator door. In his aged, arthritic robe and worn leather slippers with the rubber-soled heels, his hair as in sleep corkscrews and Alfalfa cowlicks, he looked to her like an absurd, wretched, Henry Hamlet, an indecisive figure so mesmerized by onrushing tragedy that he was helplessly diverted as to where or how to do it in any way.

(jesus stop thinking so crazy—)

Danny's hand had tightened painfully on her own. He was looking up at her intently, his face strange and anxious. He had been catching the drift of her thoughts, she realized. Just how much or how little of them he was getting was impossible to say, but she flushed, feeling much the same as if he had caught her in a masturbatory act.

"Come on," she said, and they went down the hall to Jack.

The hummings and clankings and thumpings were louder here, terrifying in a disconnected, benumbed way. Jack was staring at the closed door with feverish intensity. Through the diamond-shaped window in the center of the elevator door she thought she

car to take out the cables, thrumming slightly. The elevator clunked to a stop below them at lobby level. They heard the doors thump open. And . . .

(party)

Why were they brought party? The word had slipped unheeded into her ears for no reason at all. The silence in the Overlook was complete and the only exception the weary horses coming up the elevator shaft.

(must have been quite a party)

(???WHAT PARTY???)

For just a moment her mind had filled with an image so real that it seemed to be a memory — not just any memory but one of those you treasure, one of those you keep for very special occasions and rarely mention aloud. Lights — hundreds, maybe thousands of them. Lights and colors, the pop of champagne corks, a tiny piece of orchestra playing Glenn Miller's "In the Mood." But Glenn Miller had gone down in his bomber before she was born, how could she have a memory of Glenn Miller?

She looked down at Danny and saw his head had cocked to one side as he was hearing something she couldn't hear. His face was very pale.

Thump

The door had closed shut down here. A humming whine as the elevator began to rise. She saw the engine housing on top of the car fly out through the diamond-shaped window. Then the interior of the car, seen through the further diamond shapes made by the brass gate. Warm yellow light from the car's overhead. It was empty. The car was empty. It was empty but . . .

For the night of the party they must have crowded in by the dozens, crowded the car way beyond its safety limit but of course it had been new then and all of them wearing masks.)

(?????HAT MASKS?????)

The car stopped above them on the third floor. She looked at Danny. His face was a tight mask. His mouth was pressed into a tight, colorless slit. Above them, the brass gate rattled back. The elevator door thumped open, it thumped open because it was time. The time had come, it was time to say . . .

(Goodnight — goodnight — yes, it was lovely — no, I

really can't stay for the unmasking — early to bed, early to rise

. . . oh, was that Sheila? . . . the monk? . . . isn't that witty, Sheila coming as a monk? . . . yes goodnight . . . good)

Thump

Gears clashed. The motor engaged. The car began to whine back down.

Jack "she whispered. What is it? What's wrong with it?"

A short circuit," he said. His face was like wood. "I told you, it was a short circuit."

"I keep hearing voices in my head," she cried. "What is it? What's wrong? I feel like I'm going crazy."

"What voices?" He looked at her with deadly blandness.

She turned to Danny. "Did you?"

Danny nodded slowly. "Yes. And music. Like from a long time ago. In my head."

The elevator car stopped again. The hotel was silent, creaking, deserted. Outside, the wind whined around the eaves in the darkness.

"Maybe you are both crazy," Jack said conversationally. "I don't hear a goddamned thing except the elevator having a case of the electrical maladjusts. If you two want to have total hysterics fine. But count me out."

The elevator was coming down again.

Jack stepped to the right, where a gas-fronted box was mounted on the wall at chest height. He smashed his bare fist against it. Glass cracked inward. Blood dripped from two of his knuckles. He reached in and took out a key with a long smooth barrel.

"Jack, no. Don't."

"I am going to do my job. Now leave me alone, Wendy!"

She tried to grab his arm. He pushed her backward. Her feet tangled in the hem of her robe and she fell to the carpet with an ungainly thump. Danny cried out shrilly and fell on his knees beside her. Jack turned back to the elevator and thrust the key into the socket.

The elevator cables disappeared and the bottom of the car came into view in the small window. A second later Jack turned the key hard. There was a grating, screeching sound as the elevator car came to an instant standstill. For a moment the disenchanted motor in the basement whined even louder, and then its circuit breaker

came in and the Overlook went unearthly silent. The night wind outside seemed very loud by comparison. Jack looked stupidly at the gray metal elevator door. There was a red splinter of blood below the keyhole from his lacerated knuckles.

He turned back to Wendy and Danny for a moment. She was sitting up, and Danny had his arm around her. They were both staring at him carefully, as if he was a stranger they had never seen before, possibly a dangerous one. He opened his mouth, not sure what was going to come out.

"It . . . Wendy, it's my job."

She said clearly, "Fuck your job."

He turned back to the elevator, worked his fingers into the crack that ran down the right side of the door, and got it to open a little way. Then he was able to get his whole weight on it and threw the door open.

The car had stopped halfway, its floor at Jack's chest level. Warm light still spilled out on it, contrasting with the icy darkness of the shaft below.

He looked in for what seemed a long time.

"It's empty," he said then. A short circuit, like I said." He hooked his fingers into the slot behind the door and began to pull it closed. . . . then her hand was on his shoulder, surprisingly strong, yanking him away.

"Wendy!" he shouted. But she had already caught the car's bottom edge and pulled herself up enough so she could look in. Then, with a convulsive heave of her shoulder and belly muscles, she tried to boost herself all the way up. For a moment the issue was in doubt. Her feet tottered over the blackness of the shaft and one pink slipper fell from her foot and slipped out of sight.

"Mommy!" Danny screamed.

Then she was up, her cheeks flushed, her forehead as pale and straining as a spirit lamp. "What about his Jack? Is it a short circuit?" She threw something and suddenly the hall was replete with flaring confetti, red and white and blue and yellow. "Is *this*?" A green party streamer faded to a pale pastel color with age.

"And *this*?"

She tossed it out and it came to rest on the blue-black angle carpet, a black silk cat's-eye mask, dusted with sequins at the temples.

"Does that look like a short circuit to you, Jack?" she screamed at him.

Jack stepped slowly away from it, shaking his head mechanically back and forth. The cat-eye mask varied up bodily as the ceiling from the confetti-strewn hallway dimmed.

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THE BALLROOM

It was the first of December.

Daddy was in the east-wing ballroom, standing on an oversized, high-backed wing chair, looking at the clock under glass. It stood in the center of the ballroom's high, ornamental mantelpiece, flanked by two large ivory elephants. He almost expected the elephants would begin to move and try to gore him with their tusks as he stood there, but they were motionless. They were safe. Since the night of the elevator he had come to divide all things at the Overlook into two categories. The elevator, the basement, the playground, Room 217, and the Presidential Suite—it was Suite not Sweet, he had seen the correct spelling in an account book Daddy had been reading at supper last night and had memorized it carefully—those places were "unsafe." Their quarters, the lobby, and the porch were "safe." Apparently the ballroom was, too.

(The elephants are, anyway.)

He was not sure about other places and so avoided them on general principle.

He looked at the clock inside the glass dome. It was under glass because all its wheels and cogs and springs were showing. A chrome or steel track ran around the outside of these works, and directly below the clockface there was a small axis bar with a pair of meshing cogs at either end. The hands of the clock stood at quarter past XI, and although he didn't know Roman numerals he could guess by the configuration of the hands at what time the clock had stopped. The clock stood on a velvet base. In front of it,

slightly distorted by the curve of the dome, was a carefully carved silver key.

He supposed that the clock was one of the things he wasn't supposed to touch like the decorative fire-works in their brass-bound cabinet by the chimney fireplace or the tall china highboy at the back of the dining room.

A sense of misadventure and a feeling of angry regret suddenly rose in him and

(never mind what I'm not supposed to touch, it's never mind touched me, hasn't it? played with me, hasn't it?)

It had. And it hadn't been particularly careful not to break him, either.

Danny put his hands out, grasped the glass dome, and lifted it aside. He let one finger play over the works for a moment, the pad of his index finger denting against the cogs, running smoothly over the wheels. He picked up the silver key. For an adult it would have been uncomfortably small, but it fitted his own fingers perfectly. He placed it in the keyhole at the center of the clockface. It went arm's way home with a tiny click, more felt than heard. It wound to the right, of course, clockwise.

Danny turned the key until it would turn no more and then removed it. The clock began to tick. Cogs turned. A large balance wheel rocked back and forth in semicircles. The hands were moving. If you kept your head perfectly motionless and your eyes wide open, you could see the minute hand inching along toward its meeting some forty-five minutes from now with the hour hand. At XII.

(And the Red Death held sway over all.)

He frowned, and then shook the thought away. It was a thought with no meaning or reference for him.

He reached his index finger out again and pushed the minute hand up to the hour, curious about what might happen. It obviously wasn't a cuckoo clock, but that's certainly had to have some purpose.

There was a small rattling series of clicks, and then the clock began to tickie Strauss's "Blue Danube Waltz." A punched roll of cloth no more than two inches in width began to unwind. A small series of brass strikers rose and fell. From behind the clockface two figures glided into view along the steel track, ballet

dancers, on the left a girl in a fluffy skirt and white stockings, on the right a boy in a black leotard and ballet slippers. Their arms were held in arches over their heads. They came together in the middle, in front of VI.

Danny espied tiny grooves in their sides, just below their armpits. The axis bar slipped into these grooves and he heard another small click. The cogs at either end of the bar began to turn. "The Blue Danube," it was. The dancers' arms came down around each other. The boy flipped the girl up over his head and then whirled over the bar. They were now lying prone, the boy's head buried beneath the girl's short ballet skirt, the girl's face pressed against the center of the boy's leotard. They whirled in a mechanical frenzy.

Danny's nose wrinkled. They were kissing perpetually. That made him feel sick.

A moment later and things began to run backward. The boy whirled back over the axis bar. He flipped the girl into an upright position. They seemed to nod knowingly at each other as their hands arched back over their heads. They retreated the way they had come, disappearing just as "The Blue Danube" finished. The clock began to strike a count of silver chimes.

(Midnight Stroke at midnight)

(Hooray for masks!)

Danny whirled in the chair a most falling down. The ballroom was empty. Beyond the Jacobin cathedral window he could see fresh snow beginning to salt down. The huge ballroom, ignored up for dancing, of course, a rich tangle of red and gold embroidery, lay undisturbed on the floor. Spaced around it were simple white tables for two, the spidery chairs that went with each suspended with legs pointing at the ceiling.

The whole place was empty.

But it wasn't really empty. Because here in the Overlook bridge just went on and on. Here in the Overlook all times were one. There was an endless night in August of 1945, with laughter and drinks and a chosen shining few going up and coming down in the elevator, drinking champagne and popping party favors in each other's faces. It was a not-yet light morning in June some twenty years later and the organization hitlers endlessly pumped shots of steroids into the torn and bleeding bodies of three men who went

through their agony endlessly. In a room on the second floor a woman lolled in her tub and waited for visitors.

In the Overlook all things had a sort of life. It was as if the whole place had been wound up with a silver key. The clock was running. The clock was running.

He was the key. Danny thought, sadly. Tony had warned him and he had just let things go on.

(I'm just five!)

he cried to some half-felt presence in the room.

(Doesn't it make any difference that I'm just five?)

There was no answer.

He turned reluctantly back to the clock.

He had been pulling it off, hoping that something would happen to help him avoid trying to call Tony again, that a ranger would come, or a helicopter, or the rescue team, they always came in time on his TV programs, the people were saved. On TV the rangers and the SWAT squad and the paramedics were a friendly white force counterbalancing the confused evil that he perceived in the world. When people got in trouble they were helped out of it, they were fixed up. They did not have to help themselves out of trouble.

(Please?)

There was no answer.

No answer and if Tony came would it be the same nightmare? The booming, the hoarse and petulant voice, the blue-black rug like snakes? *Redrum?*

But what else?

(Please oh please)

No answer.

With a trembling sigh, he looked at the clockface. Cogs turned and meshed with other cogs. The balance wheel rocked hypnotically back and forth. And if you held your head perfectly still you could see the minute hand creeping inexorably down from XII to V. If you held your head perfectly still you could see that—

The clockface was gone. In its place was a round black hole. It led down into forever. It began to swell. The clock was gone. The

room behind it. Danny tottered and then fell into the darkness that had been hiding behind the clockface all along.

The small boy in the chair suddenly collapsed and lay in it at a crooked unnatural angle, his head thrown back, his eyes staring sightlessly at the high ballroom ceiling.

Down and down and down and down to—

the hallway, crouched in the hallway and he had made a wrong turn, trying to get back to the stairs he had made a wrong turn and now AND NOW—

—he saw he was in the short dead-end corridor that led only to the Presidential Suite and the booming sound was coming closer the rogue mallet whistling savagely through the air, the head of it embedding itself into the wall, cutting the silk paper, kicking out small puffs of plaster dust.

(Goddammit, come out here! Take your!)

But there was another figure in the hallway. Slouched nonchalantly against the wall, just behind him. Like a ghost.

No, not a ghost, but all dressed in white. Dressed in whites.

(I found you, you goddam white whoremastering RENT!)

Danny cringed back from the sound. Coming up the main third-floor hall now. Soon the owner of that voice would round the corner.

(Come here. Come here, you little shit!)

The figure dressed in white straightened up a little, removed a cigarette from the corner of his mouth, and plucked a shred of tobacco from his full lower lip. It was Halorann, Danny saw. Dressed in his cook's whites instead of the blue suit he had been wearing on closing day.

"If there is trouble," Halorann said, "you give a call. A big loud holler like the one that knocked me back a few minutes ago. I might hear you even way down in Florida. And if I do, I'll come on the run. I'll come on the run. I'll come on the run."

(Come now, then! Come now, come NOW! Oh Dick, I need you, we all need!)

"Run. Sorry, but I got to run. Sorry, Danny ole kid ole now, but I got to run. It's sure been fun, you son of a gun, but I got to hurry, I got to run."

(No!)

But as he watched, Dick Haborann turned, put his cigarette back into the corner of his mouth, and stepped nonchalantly through the wall.

Leaving him alone.

And that was when the shadow-figure turned the corner, huge in the hallway's gloom, only the reflected red of its eyes clear.

(There you are! Now I've got you, you fuck! Now I'll reach you!)

It lurched toward him in a horrible, shambling run, the roque mallet swinging up and up and up. Danny scrambled backward, screaming, and suddenly he was through the wall, and falling, tumbling over and over, down the hole, down the rabbit hole and into a land full of sick wonders.

Tony was far below him, near falling.

(I can't come anymore, Danny . . . he won't let me near you . . . none of them will let me near you . . . get Dick . . . get Dick . . .)

"Tony!" he screamed.

But Tony was gone and suddenly he was in a dark room. But not entirely dark. Muted light spilling from somewhere. It was Mommy and Daddy's bedroom. He could see Daddy's desk. But the room was a dreadful stambies. He had been in this room before. Mommy's record player overturned on the floor. Her records scattered on the rug. The mattress half off the bed. Pictures ripped from the walls. His cot lying on its side like a dead dog. The Violent Violet Volkswagen crushed to purple shards of plastic.

The light was coming from the bathroom door, half-open. Just beyond it a hand dangled limply, blood dripping from the tips of the fingers. And in the medicine cabinet mirror, the word RED-RUM flashing off and on.

Suddenly a huge clock in a glass bowl materialized in front of him. There were no hands or numbers on the clockface, only a date written in red: DECEMBER 7. And then, eyes widening in horror, he saw the word RIDEKUM reflecting dimly from the glass dome, now reflected twice. And he saw his spelled MURDER.

Danny Terrance screamed in wretched terror. The date was gone from the clock face. The clock face itself was gone, replaced by a circular black hole that swelled and swelled like a balloon.

iris. It blotted out everything and he fell forward, beginning to fall, falling, he was—

* * *

—falling off the chair.

For a moment he lay on the ballroom floor, breathing hard.

REDRUM.

MURDER.

REDRUM

MURDER.

(The Red Death held sway over all.)

(Unmask! Unmask!)

And behind each glittering, lovely mask, the as-yet unseen face of the shape that chased him down these dark salways, its red eyes widening, blank and homicidal.

Oh, he was afraid of what face might come to light when the time for unmasking came around at last.

(DICK!)

he screamed with all his might. His head seemed to shiver with the force of it.

(' OH DICK OH PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE COME ')

Above him the clock he had wound with the silver key continued to mark off the seconds and minutes and hours.

PART FIVE

Matters of Life
and Death

FLORIDA

Mrs. Halorann's third son, Dick, dressed in his cook's whites, a Lucky Strike parked in the corner of his mouth, backed his remaining Cadillac limo out of its space behind the One-A Whole-sale Vegetable Mart and drove slowly around the building. Masterton, part owner now but still walking with the patented shuffle he had adopted back before World War II, was pushing a bin of lettuce into the high, dark building.

Halorann pushed the button that lowered the passenger side window and hollered. "Those avocados is too damn high, you cheapskater!"

Masterton looked back over his shoulder, grinned widely enough to expose all three gold teeth, and yelled back, "And I know exactly where you can put em, my good buddy."

"Remarks like that I keep track of, *bro*."

Masterton gave him the finger. Halorann returned the compliment.

"Get your cokes, did you?" Masterton asked.

"I did."

"You come back early tomorrow, I gonna give you some of the nicest new potatoes you ever seen."

"I send the boy," Halorann said. "You comin' up tonight?"

"You supplyin' the juice, *bro*?"

"That's a big ten-four."

"I be there. You keep tridin'g off the top end go on home, you hear me? Every cop between here an St. Pete knows your name."

"You know all about it, huh?" Halorann asked, grinning.

"I know more than you I ever earn, my man."

"Listen to this sassy nigger. Would you listen?"

"Go on, get outta here fore I start throwin' these lettuce."

"Go on an' row em. I'll take anything for free."

Masterton made as if to throw one. Halorann ducked, rolled up the window, and drove on. He was feeling fine. For the last half

hour or so he had been smelling oranges but he didn't find that queer. For the last half hour he had been in a full and vegetable market.

It was 4:30 P.M. 1941 the first day of December. Old Man Wootch selling his toothless rump family in a most of the country but down here the men were open-throated short-sleeved shirts and the women were in light summer dresses and hats. On top of the first block of Florida hauling, a digital thermometer bordered with huge grapefruits was flashing 79 over and over. Thank God for Florida. Haterann thought mosquitoes and a

In the back of the limo were two dozen avocados, a crate of cucumbers, fifty oranges, fifty grapefruits. Three shopping sacks filled with Bermuda onions, the sweetest vegetable a living God ever created, some pretty good sweet peas which would be served with the entrée and come back unopened nine times out of ten and a single blue Hubbard squash that was strictly for personal consumption.

Heard and stopped in a car at the Vermont Street light, and when the green arrow showed he pulled out onto state highway 201 pushing up the city and taking it like a hot wheel began to truck away into an urban sprawl of gas stations, Burger Kings and McDonalds. It was a small wonder today he could have seen Jack Baker after that Baker had been chiding Eric's change of taste, he meant, and besides, Haterann never missed a chance to hang back and forth with Frank Masterton if he could help it. Masterton might show up tonight to watch some TV and drink Haterann's Bastards, so he might not bother way was all right. But seeing him mattered. Every time it mattered now because they weren't young anymore. In the last few days it seemed he was thinking of that very fact a great deal. Not so young as is more when you get up near sixty years old and feel the truth and save a little past it. You have to start thinking about staying out. You could go anywhere. And that had been on his mind this week, not in a heavy way but as a fact. Dying was not so very. You had to keep reminding that if you existed, if he a whole person. And the fact of your own death was not a surprise and at last wasn't depressible to accept.

Why this should have been on his mind he could not have said,

but his other reason for getting his small order himself was so he could step upstairs to the small office over Frank's Bar and Grill. There was a lawyer who lived there now—the dentist who had been there last year had a heart-attack gone broke—a young black fellow named Melver. Halorann had stepped in and told this Melver that he wanted to make a will and could Melver help him out? Well, Melver asked, how soon or you want the document? Yes er—yes, said Hal, rann, and threw his head back and laughed. Have you got anything complicated in mind? was Melver's next question. Halorann didn't. He had his Canadian's bank account—some nine thousand dollars—a piddling checking account, and a closet of clothes. He wanted it all to go to his sister. And if your sister predeceases you? Melver asked. Never mind, Halorann said. If that happens, I'll make a new will. The document had been completed and signed in less than three hours—fast work for a slyster—and now resided in Halorann's breast pocket, folded into a stiff blue envelope with the word *will* on the outside in Old English letters.

He could not have said why he had chosen this warm sunny day when he felt so well, or do something he had been putting off for years, but the impulse had come to him and he had said no. He was used to following his hunches.

He was pretty well out of town now. He cranked the amo up to an illegal sixty and let it run there, in the left-hand lane, sucking up most of the Petersburg-bound traffic. He knew from experience that the amo would still ride as sound as iron at a sixty, and even at a hundred and twenty it didn't seem to lighten up much. But his screaman days were long gone. The thought of putting the amo up to a hundred and twenty on a straight stretch only scared him. He was getting old.

Jesus, those oranges smell strong. Wonder if they're gone yet?

Bugs spluttered against the windshield. He dialed the radio to a Miami soul station and got the soft wadog voice of A. Green.

"What a beautiful time we had together,

Now it's getting late and we must leave each other . . ."

He unrolled the window, picked his cigarette half out, then rolled it further down to clear out the smell of the oranges. He

metal swung gently back and forth

4. 2. 4. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838.

[illegible]

The workers were also dropping back into the low, once-high, hum of conversation that was passed about them as they gathered the work in and went home, each carrying a small basket and a bag of fish and a few other things. A man and a woman of an old-fashioned, bushy-haired, bushy-haired

The well known character of the subject has been a man
around the drinking, weaving, and the he could be driven
the time to perform an act, see act in himself. To page
and long as with various other in his. He articulated his
own proposal that persons of Negro blood remain to be
the cause. He expressed his view, he felt in his position
and slave's soul would occupy the entire. He finished by
saying that he would be the one, the good, less modern
New Orleans house of prayer.

He had wet his pants.

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

CC ME DIA PLEASE (SEE DIA PLEASE)

but a beg to fade off the way a radio station would as you approach the limits of its broadcasting area. It became fuzzy again. And his car was idling along the soft shoulder at better than a very slow motion. He glanced back over the road, seeing the rear of the float for a moment before returning the composition surface.

There was an A Rootbeer stand just ahead. Halfmann signaled and turned it, his heart thudding painfully at his chest. He had a sickly gray color. He pulled into a parking slot, took the handkerchief out of his pocket and mopped his forehead with it.

(Lord God!)

"May I help you?"

The voice startled him again, even though it wasn't the voice of God but that of a cashier in a shop, standing by his open window with an order pad.

"Yeah, baby. A nother float. Two scoops of vanilla, eh, y?"

"Yes, sir." She walked away. He pulled, gingerly, toward her reception uniform.

Halfmann leaned back against the carter seat and closed his eyes. There was nothing left to pick up. The last of it had faded out. He was pulling in here and giving the waitress his order. And that was all. Was a sick, thudding headache, as if his brain had been twisted and wrung out and hung up to dry. Like the headache he'd gotten from seeing that boy Danny shine at him up there at Ulman's Folly.

But this had been much harder. There the boy had only been playing a game with him. This had been pure panic, each word screamed aloud in his head.

He looked down at his arms. Her sunlight lay on them but they had shuddered goose-bumped. He had told the boy to call him if he needed help. He remembered that. And now the boy was calling.

He suddenly wondered how he could have left that boy up there at all, shining the way he did. There was bound to be trouble. Maybe had trouble.

He suddenly keyed the limo, put it in reverse, and peeled back onto the highway, peeing rubber. The waitress with the waiting tips stood in the A W stand's archway, a tray with a rootbeer float on it in her hands.

"No, sir," Haltrann said, and let his voice drop to a whisper. "Another hole. Another hole. But we'll work on it. I'll take care of it. A white man. He's at my best. He's at a hospital in Denver, Colorado. Critical condition."

"How did he die? You find out? I thought you were having a good time."

"Yes, sir. I was." He had stopped. There were no more holes to be drilled. He was here to rescue an Avis car at Stapleton Airport. Before leaving he had swiped a Western Union flash. Now he took the faded and crumpled black card from his pocket and flashed it before Queens's bloodshot eyes. He put it back in his pocket and allowing his voice to drop and her mouth said: "Jensen was waiting in my letter box when I go back just now."

"Jesus, Jesus, Christ," Queens said. There was a peculiar, pit expression of concern on his face. The Haltrann was familiar with it. It was as close to an expression of sympathy as a white man who brought of himself as "good with the colored" could get when he dealt with a black man or his mythical black son.

"Yeah, okay, you get going," Queens said. "Baedeker can take over in three days, I guess. The portboy can help out."

Haltrann nodded, letting his face get larger still, but not enough on the portboy helping out. Baedeker made him grin a little. Even so a good way Haltrann doubted if the portboy could hit the animal on the first squirt.

"I want to cash back this week's pay," Haltrann said. "The white man. I know what a bird like put my man in. Mr. Queens, sir."

Queens's expression got tighter still. It looked as if he might have a toothache caught in his throat. "We can talk about this later. You go on and pack. I'll talk to Baedeker. Want me to make you a plane reservation."

"No, sir, I'll do it."

"All right." Queens stood up, leaned sincerely forward and inhaled a raft of ascending smoke from his Ken. He coughed heavily. His fair white face turning red. Haltrann struggled here to keep his smother expression. "I hope everything turns out. Dick Cad when you get word."

"I'll do that."

They shook hands over the desk.

Halbronn made no effort to get down to the ground floor as access to the brick-lamp compound before bursting into the red-shingled slaughter. He was still grinning and wiping his forehead with his handkerchief when he smelt of oranges and peaches and guavas and the bellows of a steam engine. He would, sending a bad omen ago at the park, he was in a drunken stagger.

(*FLY THE COME DICK PLEASE COME COME QUICK !!*)

He recovered a little at a time and at last felt capable of climbing the outside stairs of his apartment. He kept the latchkey under the rush-planted doormat and when he reached down to get it, something fell out of his inner pocket and fell to the second-floor deck with a thud that p. His mind was still so much on the voice that had shivered through his head that for a moment he could only look at the blue envelope blankly, not knowing what it was.

Then he turned it over and the word was stamped up at him in the black spidery letters.

(*Oh my God is it like that?*)

He didn't know. But it could be. All week long the thought of his own ending had been on his mind like a shadow like a

(*Go on, say it*)

like a premonition.

Death. For a moment his whole life seemed to flash before him. In a historical sense, an epitaph of the ups and downs that Mrs. Halbronn's third son, Dick, had lived through, but his life as it was now. Martin Luther King had told him not long before he bullet took him down to his martyr's grave that he had been to the mountains. Dick could not do it that. No mountain, but he had reached a sunny plateau after years of struggle. He had good friends. He had all the references he would ever need to get a job anywhere. When he wanted luck, why, he could find a friendly one with no questions asked and no big shiny struggle about what it all meant. He had come to terms with his blackness, happy terms. He was up past sixty and thank God he was growing.

Was he going to chance the end of that—the end of *him*—for three white people he didn't even know?

But that was a lie, wasn't it?

He knew the boy. They had shared each other the way good

twenty-three who was a table near the end of the season when things slowed down. She had a small, shining, flat-topped jugged reticule and a hairbrush and a mouse-looking man and his escort, wearing a black suit, would come in for dinner and Delores would trade one of her tables for theirs. The mousey little man would have a picture of Alexander Hamilton and his purse had enough for the girl who had made the trade, but worse. Delores would know what she was getting, a girl-off in an operation run by a man who allowed no girl-offs. She would sit in a linen closet, reading a confession magazine and smoking, but whenever Ullman went on one of his unscheduled prowls (and woe to the girl he caught resting her feet) he found her working industriously, her magazine hidden under the sheets on a high shelf, her ashtray locked safely into her uniform pocket. Year after year Halorann thought, she'd been a girl-off and a sloven and the other girls had resented her, but Delores had had that little twink of a smile that always greased the skins for her. But what she had seen in 1917 had scared her badly enough so she was more than glad to pick up the waking papers Ullman had passed her and go.

Why had she come to him? As she knew a little, Halorann thought, grinning at the pun.

So he had gone up that night and had left himself into the room which was to be removed the next day. He had used the office passkey to get in, and if Ullman had caught him with that key, he would have joined Frances Vickers on the unemployment line.

The shower curtain around the tub had been drawn. He had pushed it back but even before he did he'd had a premonition of what he was going to see. Mrs. Massey, swollen and purple, lay soggily in the tub which was half full of water. He had stood looking down at her, a pulse beating thickly in his throat. There had been other things at the Overlook—a bad dream that recurred at regular intervals, some sort of costume party and he was entering it in the Overlook's ballroom and at the shout to unmask everybody exposed faces that were those of torring insects—and there had been the hedge anemones. Twice, maybe three times, he had (or thought he had) seen them move ever so slightly. That dog would seem to change from his sitting-up posture to a slightly crouched one, and the Lens seemed to move forward, as if reacting

ing the tile tiles on the playground last year to Mr. Luman had sent him up to the attic to look for the ornate set of trunks that now stood beside the lobby fireplace. While he had been up there, the three light bulbs strung over head had gone out and he had lost his way back to the staircase. He had stumbled around for an hour or so length on time, closer and closer to panic, marking his steps on boxes and bumping his things with a stranger and stranger feeling that something was stalking him in the dark. Some great and frightening creature that had just oozed out of the woodwork when the lights went out. And when he had nervously stumbled over the trapdoor's trigger he had turned down as fast as he could, leaving the trap door sorry and disheveled with a feeling of disaster barely averted. Later Luman had come down to the kitchen personally to inform him he had left the attic trap door open and the lights burning up there. "Oh Harry, can't you tell the guests you need to go up there and play read a lantern? Don't you think electricity was free?"

And he suspected now was nearly positive that several of the guests had seen or heard things up there. In the five years he had been here, the President of State had been booked twice in rooms 5 and the guests who had put up there had left the hotel leaving some of them looking markedly so. Other guests had left other rooms with the same awkwardness. One night in August of 1914 near dusk a man who had won the Bronze and Silver medals at London was sat on the boards of the Grand Empress room and was said to have personally picked up a famous American anchorman and undoubtedly went to a hotel where series on the putting green. And here had been dozens of others during Harriman's association with the Overlook who were used to getting the pageant. One time had had a woman who was playing in the concrete rings, but Harriman didn't know that could be attributed to the Overlook's deadly secret. The word had gone around among the help that the child the daughter of a handsome new doctor was a new and very different epidemic was about to appear here as a habit.

And so staring down at the corpse of Mrs. Massey, he had been frightened but not completely terrified. It was not completely unexpected. Let it come when it would for every doctor in the bank's vet papers and began to get a hand. He knew it was

(she had started to get out and come after him.)

He had fled, heart racing, and had not felt safe even with the door shut and locked behind him. In fact, he admitted to himself now as he zipped the flightbag shut, he had never felt safe anywhere in the Overlook again.

And now the boy—crying, screaming for help.

He looked at his watch. It was 5:30 P.M. He went to the apartment's door—remembered it would be heavy winter now in Colorado, especially up in the mountains, and went back to his closet. He pulled his long, sheepskin-lined overcoat out of its polyurethane dry-cleaning bag and put it over his arm. It was the only winter garment he owned. He turned off all the lights and looked around. Had he forgotten anything? Yes. One thing. He took the wad out of his breast pocket and slipped it into the margin of the dressing-table mirror. With luck he would be back to get it.

Sure, with luck.

He left the apartment, locked the door behind him, put the key under the rush mat, and ran down the outside steps to his converted Cadillac.

* * *

Halfway to Miami International, comfortably away from the switchboard where Queens or Queens's toadies were known to listen in, Halorann stopped at a shopping center Laundromat and called United Airlines. Flights to Denver?

There was one due out at 6:36 P.M. Could the gentleman make that?

Halorann looked at his watch, which showed 6:02, and said he could. What about vacancies on the flight?

Just let me check.

A clanking sound in his ear followed by saccharine Montavani, which was supposed to make being on hold more pleasant. It didn't. Halorann danced from one foot to the other, alternating glances between his watch and a young girl with a sleeping baby in a hammock on her back unloading a coin-op Maytag. She was afraid she was going to get home later than she planned and the mast would burn and her husband—Mark? Mike? Matt?—would be mad.

A minute passed. Two. He had just about made up his mind to

drive ahead and take his chances when the canned sounding voice of the flight reservations clerk came back to him. There was an empty seat—a cancellation—it was in first class. Did that make any difference?

No. He wanted it.

Would that be cash or credit card?

Cash, baby, cash. I've got to fly.

And the name was—?

Hulorann, two f's, two n's. Catch you later.

He hung up and turned toward the door. The girl's simple thoughts, worry for the roast, broadcast at him over and over until he thought it would go mad. Sometimes it was like that, for no reason at all, you would catch a thought completely isolated, completely pure and clear—and usually completely useless.

* * *

He almost made it.

He had the time cracked up to the ghly and the airport was busy enough when the Florida's Fines pulled him over.

Hulorann untwisted the electric window and opened his mouth at the cop, who was flipping up pages in his citation book.

I know, the cop said comfortingly. It's a funeral, in Cleveland. Your father has a wedding in Seattle. Your sister. A fire in San Jose has wiped out your grandfather's candy store. Some really fine Cambodian Red just waiting in a terminal locker in New York City. Love it is piece of meat just outside the airport. I eat as a kid. Every hour was my favorite part of school.

"Listen, officer, my son is—"

The only part of the story I can never figure out until the end, the officer said, finding the right page in his citation book. The driver's license number of the offending motorist, storybook and background information. So be a nice guy. Let me peek.

Hulorann looked into the cop's calm blue eyes, debating telling his my son-is-overboard-in-a-story-bookaway-and-dead-but-would-make-things-worse. His Smokey was not Q. It is. He dug out his wallet.

Wonderful, the cop said. Would you take him out of me please? I just have to see how this is going to come out in the end."

Silently, Hallorann took out his driver's license and his Florida registration and gave them to the traffic cop.

"That's very good. That's so good you win a present."

"What?" Hallorann asked hopefully.

"When I finish writing down these numbers, I'm going to let you blow up a little balloon for me."

"Oh, *Jeeesus*," Hallorann moaned. "Officer, my flight—"

"Sh-h-h. The traffic cop said, 'Don't be naughty.'"

Hallorann closed his eyes.

* * *

He got to the United Desk at 6:49, hoping against hope that the flight had been delayed. He didn't even have to ask. The departure monitor over the incoming passengers' desk told the story. Flight 90, for Denver, due out at 6:36 EST, had left at 6:43. Nine minutes before.

"Oh shit," Dick Hallorann said.

And suddenly the smell of oranges, heavy and cloying, he had just time to reach the men's room before it came, deafening, terrified.

' COME PLEASE COME DICK PLEASE PLEASE
COME !!!

ON THE STAIRS

One of the things they had sold to swell their liquid assets a while before moving from Vermont to Colorado was Jack's collection of two hundred old rock 'n' roll and r & b albums. They had gone at the yard sale for a dollar apiece. One of these albums, Danny's personal favorite, had been an Eddie Cochran double-record set with four pages of handwritten liner notes by Lenny Kaye. Wendy had once been struck by Danny's fascination for this one particu-

lar album by a man-boy who had lived fast and died young . . . had died, in fact, when she herself had only been ten years old.

Now, at quarter past seven (mountain time), as Dick Harriman was telling Queens about his ex-wife's white boyfriend, she came upon Danny sitting halfway up the stairs between the lobby and the first floor, tossing a red rubber ball from hand to hand and singing one of the songs from that album. His voice was low and tuneless.

"So I climb one two flight three flight four," Danny sang, "five flight six flight seven flight more . . . when I get to the top, I'm too tired to rock . . ."

She came around him, sat down on one of the stair risers, and saw that his lower lip had swelled to twice its size and that there was dried blood on his chin. Her heart took a frightened leap in her chest, but she managed to speak neutrally.

"What happened, doc?" she asked, although she was sure she knew. Jack had hit him. Well, of course. That came next, didn't it? The wheels of progress, sooner or later they took you back to where you started from.

"I called Tully," Danny said. "In the bat room. I guess I fell off the chair. It doesn't hurt any more. Just feels . . . like my lips too big."

"Is that what really happened?" she asked, looking at him thoroughly.

"Daddy didn't do it," he answered. "Not today."

She gazed at him, feeling eerie. The ball traveled from one hand to the other. He had read her mind. Her son had read her mind.

"What . . . what do I say tell you, Danny?"

"It doesn't matter." His face was calm, his voice chillingly indifferent.

"Danny—" She gripped his shoulder harder than she had intended. But he didn't wince or even try to shake her off.

Oh we are wrecking this boy. It's not just Jack. It's me too, and maybe it's not even just us. Jack's father, my mother, are they here too? Sure, why not? The place is tonsy with ghosts anyway. What's a couple more? Oh I'm in heaven, he's like one of those statues he showed me. I've run over and read comic books gone through all my readers. Or a Tarzan week. Takes a licking and keeps on going. Oh Danny, I'm so sorry.

"It doesn't matter," he said again. The ball went from hand to hand. "Tony can't come anymore. They won't let him. He's jacked."

"Who won it?"

"The people in the hotel," he said. He looked at her then, and his eyes weren't indifferent at all. They were deep and scared. "A lot of things in the hotel. There's all kinds of them. The hotel is *stuffed* with them."

"You can see—"

"I don't want to see," he said low, and then looked back at the rubber ball, arcing from hand to hand. "But I can hear them sometimes, late at night. They're like the wind, all sighing together. In the attic. The basement. The rooms. All over. I thought it was my fault, because of the way I am. The key. The little silver key."

"Danny, don't—don't upset yourself his way."

"But it's *him* or—" Danny said. "It's Daddy. And it's you. It wants all of us. It's picking Daddy, it's for long him, trying to make him jack. *Wants* him the most. It wants me the most, but it will take all of us."

"If only that snowmobile—"

"They wouldn't let him," Danny said in that same low voice. "They made him throw part of it away into the snow. Far away. I dreamed it. And he knows that woman really is in '17." He looked at her with his dark, frightened eyes. "It doesn't matter whether you believe me or not."

She slipped an arm around him.

"I believe you, Danny, but the *other* is face . . . is he going to try to hurt us?"

"They'd try to make him," Danny said. "I've been calling for Mr. Haloran. He said if I ever needed him to just call. And I have been, but it's awful hard. It makes me red. And the worst part is I don't know if he's hearing me or not. I don't think he can call back because it's so far for him. And I don't know if it's too far for me or not. Tomorrow—"

"What about tomorrow?"

He shook his head. "Nothing."

"What is he *now*?" she asked. "Your daddy."

"He's in the basement. I don't think he'll be up tonight."

She stood up suddenly. "Wait right here for me. Five minutes."

* * *

The kitchen was cold and deserted under the overhead fluorescent bars. She went to the rack where the carving knives hung from their magnetized strips. She took the longest and sharpest, wrapped it in a dish towel, and left the kitchen, turning off the lights as she went.

* * *

Danny sat on the stairs, his eyes following the course of his red rubber ball from hand to hand. He sang. "She lives on the second floor up town, the elevator is broken down. So I walk one-two flight three flight four."

(—*Lou, Lou, skip to m' Lou*—)

His singing broke off. He listened.

(—*Skip to m' Lou my darlin'*—)

The voice was in his head, so much a part of him so frighteningly close that it might have been a part of his own though it was soft and dimly shy. Mocking him. Seemingly to say:

Oh yes you can like it here. Try it. You can like it. Try it. You'll like it—)

Now his ears were open and he could hear them again. The gathering, ghosts or spirits, could be the voice itself, a wandering, fun-house where all the sideshows ended, a death where all the special painted hedges were really alive where hedges were, where a small silver key could start the boombox. Soft and sighing, rustling like the endless water or wind that played under the eaves at night, the deadly laughing would be summer too is never heard. It was like the summer heat, of summer warps, of a ground near, sleepy, deadly, begging to wake up. They were on thousand feet high.

(A fly is a raven like a wing on a fly. I don't regret the error of course! Have another cup of tea!)

It was a living snarl, but not voices, no breath. A mad, philosophical, heart-breaking have called to the sound of snails. Dick Hadoruno's Nana, who had grown up on southern roads in a

years before the turn of the century, would have called it haunts. A psychic investigator might have had a long name for it—psychic echo, psychokinesis, a telestmic sport. But to Danny it was only the sound of the hotel, the old monster, creaking stealthily and ever more closely around them halls that now stretched back through time as well as distance, hungry shadows, unquiet guests who did not rest easy.

In the darkened ballroom the clock under glass struck seven-fifty with a single musical note.

A hoarse voice, made brutal with drink, shouted "*Unmask and let's fuck!*"

Wendy, halfway across the lobby, jerked to a standstill.

She looked at Danny on the stairs, still tossing the ball from hand to hand. "Did you hear something?"

Danny only looked at her and continued to toss the ball from hand to hand.

There would be little sleep for them that night, although they slept together behind a locked door.

And in the dark, his eyes open, Danny thought:

(He wants to be one of them and stay forever. That's what he wants.)

Wendy thought:

(If I have to, I'll take him further up. If we're going to die I'd rather do it in the mountains.)

She had left the butcher knife, still wrapped in the towel, under the bed. She kept her hand close to it. They dozed off and on. The hotel creaked around them. Outside snow had begun to spit down from a sky like lead.

IN THE BASEMENT

(The boiler the goddam boiler!)

The bright came into Jack Torrance's mind full-blown, edged in bright, warning red. On the stairs, the voice of Watson

(If you forget it it just creep an creep and like as not you an your furby will end up on the tuckin' moon . . . she's rated for two-fifty but she a blow long be ore shot now . . . I'd be scared to come down and stand next to her at a hundred and eighty . . .)

He'd been down here a long time, poring over the boxes of mail returns, possessed by a frantic feeling that time was getting short and he would have to hurry. Still the vital clues, the connections that would make everything clear, eluded him. His fingers were yellow and grimy with crumpling old paper. And he'd become so absorbed he hadn't checked the boiler once. He'd dumped it the previous evening around six o'clock, when he first came down. It was now . . .

He looked at his watch and jumped up, kicking over a stack of old invoices.

Christ, it was quarter of five in the morning.

Behind him, the furnace kicked on. The boiler was making a groaning, whistling sound.

He ran to it. His face, which had become thinner in the last month or so, was now heavily shadowed with beardstubble and he had a boiler-concentration-camp look.

The boiler pressure gauge stood at two hundred and ten pounds per square inch. He fancied he could almost see the sides of the old patched and welded boiler heaving out with the extra strain.

(She creeps . . . I'd be scared to come down and stand next to her at a hundred and eighty . . .)

Suddenly a cold and terrifying inner voice spoke to him.

(Let it go. Go get Wendy and Danny and get the fuck out of here. Let it blow sky-high.)

He could visualize the explosion. A double thunder-clap that would first rip the heart from this place then the soul. The boiler would go with an orange-violet flash that would rain hot and burning shrapnel all over the cellar. In his mind he could see the red-hot trunks of metal careening from floor to walls to ceiling like strange bombard balls, whistling jagged death through the air. Some of them, surely, would whizz right through that stone arch, light on the old papers on the other side, and they would burn merry hell. Destroy the secrets, burn the clues, it's a mystery no living hand will ever solve. Then the gas explosion, a great rattling crackle of flame, a giant photoflash that would burn the whole

on or off the fire into a broiler. Stairs and hallways and ceilings and rooms aflame like the cascade in the last reel of a Frankenstein movie. The flames spreading into the wings, hurrying up the black and half-burned carpets, the eager guests. The sick was panicking, chattering and curling. There were no sprinklers, only those outmoded hoses and no one to use them. And here wasn't a fire engine in the world that could get here before late March. Born, baby, born. In twelve years there would be nothing left but the bare bones.

The needle on the gauge had moved up to two twelve. The boiler was creaking and groaning like an old woman trying to get out of bed. Hissing jets of steam had begun to play around the edges of old patches, beads of solder had begun to sizzle.

He didn't see, he didn't hear. Frozen with his hand on the valve he would dump off the pressure and dump the fire. Jack's eyes glared from their sucker-like supplies.

(It's my last chance.)

The only thing not cashed in now was the life insurance policy he had taken out jointly with Wendy in the summer he won his first and second years at Sawdington. Forty thousand-dollar death benefit, double indemnity if he or she died in a train crash, a plane crash, or a fire. Seven-consecutive, die the secret agent and win a hundred dollars.

(A fire . . . eighty thousand dollars.)

They would have time to get out. Even if they were sleeping, they would have time to get out. He believed that. And he didn't think the hugges or anything else would try to hold them back if the Overlook was going up in flames.

(Flames.)

The needle inside the greasy, almost opaque dial had danced up to two hundred and fifteen pounds per square inch.

Another memory occurred to him, a childhood memory. There had been a wasps' nest in the lower branches of their apple tree behind the house. One of his older brothers—he couldn't remember which one now—had been stung while swinging in the old tire. Daddy had hung from one of the tree's lower branches. It had been late summer, when wasps tend to be at their ugliest.

Their father, just home from work, dressed in his whites, the smell of beer hanging around his face in a fine mist, had gathered

all three boys—Brett, Mike and little Jacky—also told them he was going to get rid of the wasps.

Now which he had said, saying only a general thing about it had it been using the cane he had the clubhouse with the truck track was yours in the future? Maybe you can something. My mother showed me this."

He had taken a big pile of rain-damaged leaves from a branch where the wasps' nest rested, a delicious fruit from a shrunk but tasty apples that were usually produced in late September which was then still half a month away. He lit the leaves. The day was clear and windless. The leaves smoldered but didn't really burn, and they made a sweet fragrance—that belonged back to him each fall when men in Saturday pants and light Windbreakers raked leaves together and burned them. A sweet smell with a bitter undertone, rich and evocative. The smoldering leaves produced great rafts of smoke that drifted up to obscure the nest.

The father had let the leaves smolder all his afternoon, drinking beer on the porch and dropping the empty Black Lake cans in his wife's plastic floor-hackie while his two older sons flanked him and little Jacky sat on the steps at his feet, playing with his Horn Bouncer and saying monotonously over and over, "My cheating heart. . . . We'll make you weep. . . . My cheating heart. . . . is gonna tell on you."

At quarter of six, just before supper, Daddy brought out to the apple tree with his sons gripped carefully behind him. In one hand he had a garden hoe. He knocked the leaves apart, covered the coals spread around to smolder and the. Then he reached—hoe handle up, weaving and blinking, and after two or three tries he knocked the nest to the ground.

The boys fled for the safety of the porch, but Daddy only stood over the nest, swaying and blinking down at it. Jacky crept back to see. A few wasps were crawling sluggishly over the paper terrain of their property, but they were not trying to fly. From the inside of the nest, the back and a few pieces came a never-to-be-forgotten sound: a low, somnolent buzz like the sound of high tension wires.

"Why don't they try to sing you, Daddy?" he had asked.

"The smoke makes em drunk, Jacky. Go get my guitar."

He ran to fetch it. Daddy doused the nest with amber gasoline.

"Now step away, Jacky, unless you want to lose your eyebrows."

He stepped away. From somewhere in the voluminous folds of his white overalls, Daddy had produced a wooden kitchen mallet. He hit it with his thumb nail and flung it onto the nest. There had been a white-orange explosion, almost soundless, in its turn. Daddy had stepped away, cackling wildly. The wasps' nest had gone up in no time.

"Fire!" Daddy had said, turning to Jacky with a smile. "Fire will kill anything."

After supper the boys had come out in the day's waning light to stand solemnly around the charred and blackened nest. From the hot interior had come the sound of wasp bodies popping like corn.

The pressure gauge stood at two-twenty. A low iron wailing sound was building up in the guts of the thing. Jets of steam stood out erect in a hundred places like porcupine quills.

(Fire will kill anything.)

Jack suddenly started. He had been dozing off, and he had almost dozed himself right into kingdom come. What if God's name had he been thinking of? Protecting the boat was his job. He was the caretaker.

A sweat of terror sprang to his hands so quickly that at first he missed his grip on the large valve. Then he curled his fingers around its spokes. He whirled it one turn, two, three. There was a giant hiss of steam, dragon's breath. A warm tropical mist rose from beneath the bower and veiled him. For a moment, he could no longer see the dial, but he thought he must have waited too long, the groaning, clanking sound inside the bower increased, followed by a series of heavy rattling sounds and the wrenching screech of metal.

When some of the steam blew away he saw that the pressure gauge had dropped back to two hundred and was still sinking. The jets of steam escaping around the scoured patches began to lose their force. The wrenching, grinding sounds began to diminish.

One-ninety . . . one-eighty . . . one-seventy-five . . .

(He was going downhill, going ninety miles an hour, when the whistle broke into a scream—)

But he didn't look it would blow now. The press was down to one-sixty.

As they found him in the wreck with his hand out he didn't know he was scared to death by a steam.

He stepped away from the boiler breathing hard, retching. He looked at his hands and saw the blisters were already rising on his palms. He wouldn't be blisters, he thought, and sighed shakily. He had almost died with his hands on the front of the Casey, the engineer in "The Wreck of the Old 97." Well, sure, he would have killed the Overlook. The final crushing failure. He had failed as a teacher, a writer, a husband, and a father. He had even failed as a crank. But you couldn't do much better in the old talent category than to blow up the building you were supposed to be taking care of. And this was no ordinary building.

By no means.

Christ, but he needed a drink.

The press had dropped down to eighty psi. Cautiously winning a little at the pain in his hands, he closed the dump valve again. But from now on the boiler would have to be watched more closely than ever. It might have been seriously weakened. He wouldn't trust it to more than one hundred psi for the rest of the winter. And if they were a little crazy, they would just have to grin and bear it.

He had broken two of the busters. His hands, rubbed like rotten teeth.

A drink. A drink would fix him up, and there wasn't a thing in the goddamn house besides cooking sherry. At this point a drink would be medicinal. That was just it, by God. An anesthetic. He had done his duty and now he could use a little anesthetic—something stronger than Excedrin. But there was nothing.

He remembered bottles glittering in the shadows.

He had saved the hotel. The hotel would want to reward him. He felt sure of it. He took his handkerchief out of his back pocket, and went to the stars. He rubbed at his mouth. Just a little crink. Just one. To ease the pain.

He had served the Overlook, and now the Overlook would serve him. He was sure of it. His feet on the stair risers were quick and eager, the hurrying steps of a man who has come home from a long and bitter war. It was 5:20 A.M., MST.

DAYLIGHT

... was with a ... in a terrible ... The ...
... A fire the Overlook was burning up the
... was watching from the front lawn.

"Mummy had said—Look, Danny, look at the hedges!"

He looked at them and they were all dead. Their leaves had
fallen and sad and ... The tightly packed branches showed
... the ... And the
... of the Overlook's big double doors, ...
... was burning like a torch. His clothes were in flames, his skin
... a look and so ... that was growing darker by
... his hair was a burning bush.

It was when he woke up, his throat ... with fear, his hands
clutching at the sheet and blankets. Had he ... He looked
over at his mother. Wendy lay on her side, the blankets up to her
... straw-colored hair lying against her cheek. She
... herself. No, he hadn't screamed.

Lying in bed, looking upward, the nightmare began to drain
away. He had a curious feeling that some great tragedy

(fire? explosion?)

had been averted by inches. He let his mind drift out searching
for his Daddy and found him standing somewhere below in the
lobby. Danny pushed at the barrier, trying to get inside his father.
It was not good. Because Daddy was thinking about the Bad
Thing. He was thinking how

... rare sun's over the wind-
at ... how we used to say that
... with just a dash of ... and
... and ... a drink for me
and a drink ... martini have landed somewhere in the
... or ... on ... some lucky
place ... the season and none of us are)

GET OUT OF HIS MIND YOU LITTLE SHIT,

He recoiled in terror from that mental voice, his eyes widening, his hands tightening into claws on the counterpane. It hadn't been the voice of his father but a clever mimic. A voice he knew. Harsh, brutal, yet underpinned with a vacuous sort of humor.

Was it so near, then?

He threw the covers back and swung his feet out onto the floor. He kicked his slippers out from under the bed and put them on. He went to the door and pulled it open and turned up to see the main corridor, his sapped feet whispering on the nap of the carpet runner. He turned the corner.

There was a man on all fours halfway down the corridor between him and the stairs.

Danny froze.

The man looked up at him. His eyes were tiny and red. He was dressed in some sort of silvery spangled costume. A dog costume. Danny realized. Protruding from the rump of this strange creation was a long and floppy tail with a puff on the end. A zipper ran up the back of the costume to the neck. To the left of him was a dog's or wolf's head, blank eyesockets above the muzzle, its mouth open in a meaningless snarl that showed the ragged black and blue pattern between fangs that appeared to be papier maché.

The man's mouth and chin and cheeks were smeared with blood.

He began to growl at Danny. He was growling, but the growl was real. It was deep in his throat, a chilling primitive sound. Then he began to bark. His teeth were also stained red. He began to crawl toward Danny, dragging his boneless tail behind him. The costume dog's head lay unheeded on the carpet, glaring vacantly over Danny's shoulder.

"Let me by," Danny said.

"I'm going to eat you, little boy," the dogman answered, and suddenly a fusillade of barks came from his growling mouth. They were human imitations, but the savagery in them was real. The man's hair was dark, greased with sweat, from his conning costume. There was a mixture of scotch and champagne on his breath.

Danny flinched back but didn't run. "Let me by."

"Not by the hair of my chunny-chin-chin," the dogman replied. His small red eyes were fixed attentively on Danny's face. He con-

needed to grin. I'm going to eat you up," the boy said. Jack
 started with a sour, damp little creak.

He began to prance skittery forward, making little wags and
 snarling.

Danny's nerve broke. He fled back into the short hallway that
 led to their quarters, walking back over his shoulder. There was a
 series of mixed howls and winks and growls backed by some
 mutterings and giggles.

Danny stood in the hallway, catching

"Get it up!" the drunken dogman cried out from around the
 corner. His voice was both violent and despairing. "Get it up,
 Harry you black-bastard! I don't care how many casinos and an-
 imes and movie companies you own. I know what you like in the
 privacy of your own home! Get it up! *It hurt* and *It hurt*

and I Harry Derwent's *ab blowwww down*!" He ended with
 a long, chilling howl that seemed to turn into a scream of rage
 and pain just before it dwindled off.

Danny turned apprehensively to the closed bathroom door at the
 end of the hallway and walked quietly down to it. He opened it
 and poked his head through. His mommy was sleeping in exactly
 the same position. No one was hearing this but him.

He closed the door softly and went back up to the intersection
 of their corridor and the main hall, hoping the dogman would be
 gone, the way the blood on the walls of the Presidential Suite had
 been gone. He peeked around the corner carefully.

The man in the dog costume was still there. He had put his
 head back on and was now prancing on all fours by the stairwell,
 chasing his tail. He occasionally leaped off the rug and came down
 making dog grunts in his throat.

"Woof! Woof! Bowwowwow! *Grrrrrr!*"

These sounds came hollowly out of the mask's stylized snarling
 mouth, and among them were sounds that might have been sighs
 or laughter.

Danny went back to the bedroom and sat down on his cot, cov-
 ering his eyes with his hands. The hotel was running things now.
 Maybe at first the things that had happened had only been acci-
 dents. Maybe at first the things he had seen really were like scary
 pictures that couldn't hurt him. But now the hotel was controlling
 those things and they *could* hurt. The Overlook hadn't wanted

him to go to his father. That might spoil all the fun. So it had put the dogman in his way, just as it had put the hedge animals between them and the road.

But his daddy could come here. And sooner or later his daddy would.

He began to cry, the tears rolling silently down his cheeks. It was too late. They were going to die, all three of them, and when the Overlook opened next late spring, they would be right here to greet the guests along with the rest of the spooks. The woman in the lab. The dogman. The horrible dark thing that had been in the cement tunnel. They would be—

(Stop! Stop that now!)

He knuckled the tears furiously from his eyes. He would try as hard as he could to keep that from happening. Not to himself, no, to his daddy and mommy. He would try as hard as he could.

He closed his eyes and sent his mind out in a high, hard crystal bolt.

(DICK PLEASE COME QUICK WE'RE IN BAD TROUBLE DICK WE NEED)

And suddenly, in the darkness behind his eyes the thing that chased him down the Overlook's dark halls in his dreams was there right there, a huge creature dressed in white, its prehensile club raised over its head.

"I'll make you stop. You goddam puppy. I'll make you stop because I am your FATHER!"

"No!" He jerked back to the reality of the bedroom, his eyes wide and staring, the screams tumbling helplessly from his mouth as his mother bolted awake, clutching the sheet to her breasts.

"No Daddy no no no—"

And they both heard the vicious, descending swing of the invisible club, cutting the air somewhere very close, then fading away to silence as he ran to his mother and hugged her, trembling like a rabbit in a snare.

The Overlook was not going to let him call Dick. That night spoiled the fun, too.

They were alone.

Outside the snow came harder, cutting them off from the world.

MID-AIR

Dick Halorann's flight was called at 6:45 A.M. EST and the boarding clerk held him by Gate 3—shifting his flight bag nervously from hand to hand, until the last call at 6:55. They were both looking for a man named Carlton Vecker, the only passenger on TWA's Flight 146 from Miami to Denver who hadn't checked in.

"Okay," the clerk said, and issued Halorann a blue plastic boarding pass. "You walked out. You can board, sir."

Halorann hurried up the crooked boarding ramp and, on the mechanically grunting stairway, tear his pass off and gave it to the stub.

"We're serving breakfast on this flight," the steward said. "If you'd like—"

"Just coffee, please," he said, and went down the aisle to a seat in the smoking section. He kept expecting the no-show Vecker to pop through the door like a jack-in-the-box at the last second. The woman in the seat by the window was reading *You Can Be Your Own Best Friend* with a scorn, unrelenting expression on her face. Halorann bucked his seat back and then wrapped his large black hands around the seat's armrests and promised the absent Carlton Vecker that it would take him and five strong TWA flight attendants to drag him out of his seat. He kept his eye on his watch. He dragged off the minutes to the 7:00 takeoff time with increasing slowness.

At 7:05, the stewardess informed him that there would be no flight today while the ground crew rechecked one of the engines on the cargo door.

"Shit for brains," Dick Halorann muttered.

The sharp-faced woman turned her scornful, judging expression on him and then went back to her book.

He had spent the time at the airport waiting for a letter to

corner—United American TWA, Connecticut. Bronoff taunting the ticket clerks. Sometime after midnight, drinking his eighth or ninth cup of coffee in the canteen, he had decided he was being an asshole to have taken this whole thing on his own shoulders. There were authorities. He had gone down to the nearest bank of telephones, and after talking to three different operators, he had gotten the emergency number of the Rocky Mountain National Park Authority.

The man who answered the telephone sounded utterly worn out. Halvorann had given a false name and said there was trouble at the Overlook Hotel, west of Snowmass. Bad trouble.

He was put on hold.

The ranger (Halvorann assumed he was a ranger) came back on in about five minutes.

"They've got a C.B.," the ranger said.

"Sure they've got a C.B.," Halvorann said.

"We haven't had a Mayday call from them.

Man, that don't matter. They—"

"Exactly what kind of trouble are they in, Mr. Hal?"

"Well, there's a family. The caretaker and his family. I think maybe he's gone a little nuts, you know. I think maybe he might hurt his wife and his little boy."

May I ask how you've come by this information, sir?"

Halvorann closed his eyes. "What's your name, please?"

"Tom Staunton, sir."

"Well, Tom, I know how I'd be in a struggle with you as I can be. There's bad trouble up there. Maybe bad and, as you'd say, what I'm saying?"

"Mr. Hal, I really have to know how you—"

"Look," Halvorann had said. "I'm telling you I know. A few years back there was a fellow up there named Grady. He killed his wife and his two daughters and then puted he string on himself. I'm telling you it's going to happen again if you guys don't haul your asses out here and stop it."

"Mr. Hal, you're not calling from Colorado."

"No. But what difference—"

"If you're not in Colorado, you're not in C.B. range. The Overlook Hotel. If you're not in C.B. range you can't possibly have been in contact with Grady." "Print out a lot of papers." The T r

rance family. While I had you on hold I tried to telephone L.L.'s out, which is nothing unusual. There are still twenty-five miles of aboveground telephone lines between the hotel and the Sidewinder switching station. My conclusion is that you must be some sort of crack."

"Oh man, you stupid . . ." But his despair was too great to find a noun to go with the adjective. Suddenly a woman's voice came. "Call them," he cried.

"Sir?"

"You got the CB, they got the CB. So call them! Call them and ask them what's up!"

There was a brief silence, and the humming of long-distance wires.

"You tried that too, didn't you?" Harkerann asked. "That's why you had me on hold so long. You tried the phone and then you tried the CB and you didn't get *nothing* but you don't think much of things wrong . . . what are you guys doing up there? Sitting on your asses and playing goddammy?"

"No, we are not," Squarley said angrily. Hadtrans was relieved at the sound of anger in the voice. For the first time he felt he was speaking to a man and not to a recording. "I'm the only man here, sir. Every other ranger in the park, *plus* game wardens *plus* volunteers, are up in Hasty Noth, risking their lives because three stupid assholes with six months' experience decided to try the north face of King's Ram. They're stuck halfway up there and maybe they'll get down and maybe they won't. There are two choppers up there and the men who are flying them are risking their lives because it's night here and it's starting to snow. So now we're sort of having trouble putting it all together. I'll give you a hand with it. Number one, I don't have anybody to send to the overlook. Number two, the Overlook isn't a priority here—what happens in the park is a priority. Number three, by daybreak, whether one of those choppers will be able to fly because it's going to snow like crazy according to the National Weather Service. Do you understand the situation?"

"Yeah." Harkerann had said softly. "I understand."

"Now my guess as to why I couldn't raise them on the CB is very simple. I don't know where the CB is, which is where you are. But call

She opened her book and began to read. The NO SMOKING sign went off. Halloran watched the recording and and wondered if the boy was all right. He had developed an affectionate feeling for that boy although it's feelings hadn't seemed all that much.

He hoped the God boys were watching out for Danny.

43

DRINKS ON THE
HOUSE

Jack stood in the dining room just outside the barwing doors leading into the Colorado Lounge, his head cocked, listening. He was smiling faintly.

Around him, he could hear the Overlook Hotel coming to life.

It was hard to say just how he knew, but he guessed it wasn't greatly different from the perceptions Danny had from time to time. Like father, like son. Wasn't that how it was popularly expressed?

It wasn't a perception of sight or sound, although it was very near to those things, separated from those senses by the faintest of perceptual curtains. It was as if another Overlook now, only scant inches beyond this one, separated from the real world (if there is such a thing as a "real world," Jack thought) but gradually coming into balance with it. He was reminded of the 3-D movies he'd seen as a kid. If you looked at the screen without the special glasses, you saw a double image—the sort of thing he was feeling now. But when you put the glasses on, it made sense.

All the hotel's eras were together now, at last, but this current one, the Torrance Era. And this would be together with the rest very soon now. That was good. That was very good.

He could almost hear the self-important ding-dong of the silver-plated bell on the registration desk summoning bellboys to the front as many of the fashionable flannels of the 1970s checked in and many of fashionable 1940s double-breasted sportcoats checked out. There would be three pairs sitting in front of the bar.

place as they waited for the check and line to them, and standing behind them, neatly dressed with diamond stickpins holding their blue and-white-figured ties, Charles Grondin and Vito Giordano discussed profit and loss, life and death. There was a dozen trucks in the loading bay out back, some laid one over the other like had time exposures. In the wing ballroom, a dozen different business conventions were going on at the same time within compass of each other. There was a costume ball going on. There were soirees, wedding receptions, birthday and anniversary parties. Men talking about Neville Chamberlain and the Archduke of Austria. Music. Laughter. Drunkenness. Hysteria. Love, not here but a steady undercurrent of sensuousness. And he could almost hear all of them together, drifting through the hotel and making a graceful cat-phony. In the dining room where he served breakfast, lunch and dinner for seventy years were others being served, some tenacious just behind him. He could almost — no, strike the *almost*. He *could* hear them, faintly as yet but clearly — the way one can hear thunder miles off on a clear summer's day. He could hear all of them, the beautiful strangers. He was becoming aware of them as they must have been aware of him from the very start.

All the rooms of the Overlook were occupied this morning.

A full house.

And beyond the bar wings a low murmur of conversation dulled and swayed like lazy cigarette smoke. More sophisticated, more private. Low, intimate female laughter the kind that seems to vibrate in a fairy ring around the viscera and the genitals. The sound of a cash register, its window softly lighted in the warm fat darkness, ringing up the price of a gin tonic, a Manhattan, a depression bomber, a shoe gun, a buzz, a zombie. The jukebox, putting out its crackers, melba toast, each one live, tapping the notes in time.

He pushed the bar wings open and stepped through.

He is, boys. Jack Torrance said softly. "I've been away but now I'm back."

"Good evening, Mr. Torrance," Elwyn said, genuinely pleased. "It's good to see you."

"It's good to be back," said the said guest, and looked long enough over his shoulder to see Elwyn in a sharp blue suit and tie.

eved woman in a black dress who was peering into the depths of a singapore sling.

"What will it be, Mr. Torrance?"

"Martini," he said with great pleasure. He looked at the back-bar with its rows of dainty gaming bottles, capped with their silver sphinxes. Jim Beam. Wild Turkey. Gaby's. Starrod's Private Label. Toro. Scagran's. And home again.

"One large martini, if you please," he said. "They've landed somewhere in the world. Lloyd." He took his wallet out and laid a twenty carefully on the bar.

As Lloyd made his drink, Jack looked over his shoulder. Every booth was occupied. Some of the occupants were dressed in costumes. . . a woman in gauzy harem pants and a rhinestone-sparkled brassiere, a man with a foxhead rising slyly out of his evening dress, a man in a saucy dog outfit who was licking the nose of a woman in a sarong with the puff on the end of his long tail, to the general amusement of all.

"No charge to you, Mr. Torrance," Lloyd said, putting the drink down on Jack's weepily. "Your money is no good here. Orders from the manager."

"Manager?"

A faint unease came over him, nevertheless he picked up the martini glass and swirled it, watching the dove at the bottom bob slightly in the drink's chilly depths.

"Of course. The manager." Lloyd's smile broadened, but his eyes were socketed in shadow and his skin was horribly white, like the skin of a corpse. "Later he expects to see to your son's well-being himself. He is very interested in your son. Danny is a talented boy."

The juniper fumes of the gin were pleasantly maddening, but they also seemed to be barring his reason. Danny? What was all of this about Danny? And what was he doing in a bar with a drink in his hand?

HE HAD TAKEN THE FLUDGE. HE HAD COME ON THE WAGON. HE HAD SWORN OFF.

What could they want with his son? What could they want with Danny? Wendy and Danny weren't in it. He tried to see into Lloyd's shadowed eyes, but it was no work too dark. . . was like trying to read emotion into the empty orbs of a skull.

*It's me they are want . . . isn't it I am the one Not Danny,
not Wena I'm the one who loves u here They wanted to see u
I'm the one who took care of the snowmobile . . . went through
the old records . . . unmasked he pretends he knows . . . red
pale . . . soul my soul . . . what can they want with me?*

Where is the manager? He tried to ask it casually but his words seemed to come out between lips already numbbed by the first drink like words from a dream, more rather than those of a sweet dream.

Lloyd only smiled.

"What do you want with my son? Danny's not in this . . . is he?" He heard the naked plea in his own voice.

Lloyd's face seemed to be turning, changing, becoming something pestilent. The white skin becoming a hepatic yellow, crackling. Red sores erupting on the skin, bleeding foul-smelling liquid. Droplets of blood sprang out on Lloyd's forehead like sweat and somewhere a silver chime was striking the quarter-hour.

(Unmask, unmask!)

"Drink your drink, Mr. Torrance." Lloyd said softly. "It isn't a matter that concerns you. Not at this point."

He picked his drink up again, raised it to his lips and hesitated. He heard the hard, horrible snap as Danny's arm broke. He saw the bicycle flying brokenly up over the hood of a car, starting the windshield. He saw a single wheel, lying in the road, twisted spokes pointing into the sky like legs of piano wire.

He became aware that a conversation had stopped.

He looked back over his shoulder. They were all looking at him expectantly, silently. The man beside the woman in the sarcophagus had removed his forehead and Jack saw that it was Horace Derwent, his pallid blond hair spilling across his forehead. Everyone at the bar was watching, too. The woman beside him was looking at him closely, as if trying to focus. Her dress had slipped off one shoulder and looking down he could see a loosely puckered nipple capping one sagging breast. Looking back at her face he began to think that this might be the woman from 217, the one who had tried to strangle Danny. On his other hand, the man in the sharp blue suit had removed a small pear-handled .32 from his jacket pocket and was idly spinning it on the bar like a man with Russian roulette on his mind.

(*I want—*)

He repeated the words were now passing through his frozen vocal cords and tried again.

"I want to see the manager. I . . . I don't think he understands. My son is not a part of this. He . . ."

Mr. Torrance, Lloyd said, his voice coming with a haunting gentleness from inside his pale added face: "You will meet the manager in due time. He has in fact decided to make you his agent in this matter. Now drink your drink."

"Drink your drink," he repeated.

He picked it up with a badly trembling hand. I was aw-gin. He looked into it, and looking was like drowning.

The woman beside him began to sing in a flat, dead voice: "Roll out the barrel . . . and we'll have a barrel of fun . . ."

Lloyd picked it up. Then the man in the blue suit. The dog-gram picked it up, thumping one paw against the table.

Now's the time to roll the barrel—"

Derwent added his voice to the rest. A cigarette was cocked in one corner of his mouth at a jaunty angle. His right arm was around the shoulders of the woman in the sarong, and his right hand was gently and absently striking her right breast. He was talking at the same time with amused contempt as he sang:

"—because the gang's . . . all . . . here"

Jack brought the drink to his mouth and downed it in three long gulps, the gin big-balling down his throat like a moving van in a tunnel, exploding in his stomach, rebounding up to his brain in one leap where it seized hold of him with a final convulsing fit of the shakes.

When that passed off, he felt fine.

"Don't again, please," he said, and pushed the empty glass toward Lloyd.

"Yes, sir," Lloyd said, taking the glass. Lloyd looked perfectly normal, again. The olive-skinned man had put his 32 away. The woman on his right was staring into her Singapore sling again. One breast was wholly exposed now, leaning on the bar's leather buffer. A vacuous crooning noise came from her slack mouth. The boom of conversation had begun again, weaving and weaving.

His new drink appeared in front of him.

Martians graaaaas Lloyd he said, making it up.

Always a pleasure to serve you, Mr. Torrance. Lloyd smiled. You were always the best of the a, L, yds."

"Why, thank you, sir."

He drank slowly this time, letting it trickle down his throat, tossing a few pennies down the chute for good luck.

The drink was gone in no time and he ordered another. Mr. President, I have met the martians and am pleased to report they are friendly. While Lloyd fixed another, he began searching his pockets for a quarter to put in the jukebox. He thought of Danny again, but Danny's face was pleasantly fuzzed and nondescript now. He ~~had~~ hurt Danny once, but that had been before he had learned how to handle his liquor. Those days were behind him now. He would never hurt Danny again.

Not for the world.

44

CONVERSATIONS AT THE PARTY

He was dancing with a beautiful woman.

He had no idea what time it was, how long he had spent in the Colorado Lounge or how long he had been here in the ballroom. Time had ceased to matter.

He had vague memories of listening to a man who had once been a successful radio comic and then a variety star in TV's infant days telling a very long and very hilarious joke about incest between Siamese twins, seeing the woman in the harem pants and the sequined bra do a slow and sensuous striptease to some bumping-and-grinding music from the jukebox (it seemed it had been David Rose's theme music from *The Stripper*), crossing the lobby as one of three, the other two men in evening dress that predated the twenties, all of them singing about the stiff patch on Rosie O'Grady's knickers. He seemed to remember looking out the big double doors and seeing Japanese lanterns strung at graceful

curving arcs that followed the sweep of the driveway— they came in soft pastel colors like dusky jewels. The big glass globe on the porch ceiling was on, and night insects buzzed and filtered against it, and a part of them perhaps the last tiny spark of sobriety tried to tell him that it was too late in a morning in December. But he had been deceived.

(The arguments against marriage run through with a vibrating sound, layer on layer . . .)

Who was it, if? Some poet he had read as an amusing add-on? Some undergraduate poet who was now selling washers in Wausau or insurance in Indianapolis? Perhaps an original thought? Didn't matter.

(The night is dark the stars are high a disembodied custard plate floating in the sky . . .)

He giggled helplessly.

"What's funny, honey?"

And here he was again in the bathroom. The character was 1, and couples were circling all around—some in costume and some no— to the smooth sounds of some postwar band— but which war? Can you be certain?

No, of course not. He was certain of only one thing: he was dancing with a beautiful woman.

She was tall and Auburn-haired. Dressed in clinging white satin, and she was dancing close to him, her breasts pressed softly and sweetly against his chest. Her white hand was entwined in his. She was wearing a small and sparkly cat's-eye mask and her hair had been brushed over to one side in a soft and gleaming fall that seemed to pool in the valley between their touching shoulders. Her dress was full-skirted but he could feel her thighs against his legs from time to time and had become more and more sure that she was smooth-and-powdered naked under her dress.

(the better to feel your erection with my dear)

and he was sporting a regular railspike. If it offended her she concealed it well. she snuggled even closer to him.

"Nothing funny, honey," he said, and giggled again.

"I like you," she whispered, and he thought that her secret was like a secret and sudden in cracks furrowed with green moss— places where sunshine is short and shadows long.

"I like you, too."

We could go upstairs if you want. I'm supposed to be with Harry but he'll never notice. He's too busy teasing poor Roger."

The number ended. There was a spate of applause and then the band swung into "Mood Indigo" with scotchy a pause.

Jack looked over her bare shoulder and saw Derwent standing by the refreshment table. The girl in the sarong was with him. There were bottles of champagne in ice buckets ranged along the white lawn covering the table and Derwent held a foaming bottle in his hand. A knot of people had gathered, laughing. In front of Derwent and the girl in the sarong, Roger capered grotesquely on all fours, his tail dragging limply behind him. He was barking.

"Speak, boy, speak!" Harry Derwent cried.

"Rowf! Rowf!" Roger responded. Everyone clapped a few of the men whistled.

"Now sit up. Sit up, doggy!"

Roger clambered up on his haunches. The muzzle of his mask was frozen in its eternal snarl. Inside the eyeholes, Roger's eyes rolled with frantic, sweaty hilarity. He held his arms out, dangling the paws.

"Rowf! Rowf!"

Derwent upended the bottle of champagne and it fell in a foamy Niagara onto the upturned mask. Roger made frantic, sharping sounds, and everyone applauded again. Some of the women screamed with laughter.

"Isn't Harry a card?" his partner asked him, pressing close again. "Everyone says so. He's AC/DC, you know. Poor Roger" only DC. He spent a weekend with Harry in Cuba once . . . oh months ago. Now he follows Harry everywhere, wagging his little tail behind him."

She giggled. The shy scent of lilies drifted up.

"But of course Harry never goes back for seconds . . . not on his DC side, anyway . . . and Roger's just *wind*. Harry told me if he came to the masked ball as a doggy, a *cute* little doggy, he might reconsider and Roger is *such* a silly that he . . ."

The number ended. There was more applause. The band members were fling down for a break.

"Excuse me, sweetness," she said. "There's someone I *just must* Darta. Darta, you *dear* girl, where have you *been*?"

She wove her way into the evening, drinking throng and he

gazed after her stupidly, wondering how they had happened to be dancing together in the first place. He didn't remember. Incidents seemed to have occurred with no connections. First here, then there, then everywhere. His head was spinning. He smiled aies and anper berries. Up by the refreshment table Derwent was now holding a tiny triangular sandwich over Roger's head and urging him, to the general merriment of the onlookers, to do a somersault. The dogmask was turned upward. The silver sides of the big costume belloxed in and out. Roger suddenly leaped, tucking his head under, and tried to roll in mid-air. His leap was too low and too exhausted; he landed awkwardly on his back, rapping his head smartly on the tiles. A hollow groan drifted out of the dogmask.

Derwent led the applause. "Try again, doggy! Try again!"

The onlookers took up the chant: *try again, try again*—and Jack staggered off the other way, feeling vaguely ill.

He almost fell over the drinks cart that was being wheeled along by a low-browed man in a white mess jacket. His foot rapped the lower chromed shelf of the cart, the bottles and siphons on top chattered together muscally.

"Sorry," Jack said thickly. He suddenly felt closed in and claustrophobic; he wanted to go out. He wanted the Overlook back the way it had been—free of these unwanted guests. His place was not honored, as the true operator of the way, he was only another of the ten thousand cheering extras, a doggy rolling over and springing up on command.

"Quite all right," the man in the white mess jacket said. The polite, clipped English coming from that thug's face was surreal. "A drink?"

"Martin."

From behind him, another comb of laughter broke, Roger was howling to the tune of "He'll Be in the Range." Someone was picking out accompaniment on the Sweeney baby grand.

"Here you are."

The frosty cold glass was pressed into his hand. Jack drank gratefully, letting the gin hit and crumble away the first intruders of sobriety.

"Is it all right, sir?"

"Fine."

"Thank you, sir." The cart began to roll again.

Jack suddenly reached out and touched the man's shoulder.

"Yes, sir?"

Pardon me, but . . . who's your name?"

The other showed no surprise. Grady said, "Debert Grady."

"But you . . . I mean that . . ."

The bartender was looking at him piously. Jack knew again, although his mouth was mushed by gin and uncertainty, each word felt as large as an ice cube.

"Weren't you once the caretaker here . . . when you . . . when

But he couldn't finish. He couldn't say it.

"Why no, sir. I don't believe so."

"But your wife . . . your daughters . . ."

"My wife is helping in the kitchen, sir. The girls are asleep, of course. It's much too late for them."

"You were the caretaker. You — *Oh, say it.* You looked after them."

Grady's face remained blankly polite. "I don't have any recollection of that at all, sir." His glass was empty. Grady plucked it from Jack's unresisting fingers and set about making another drink for him. There was a small white plastic bucket on his cart that was filled with olives. For some reason they reminded Jack of tiny severed heads. Grady speared one delicately, dropped it into the glass, and handed it to him.

"But you—"

"You're the caretaker, sir," Grady said mildly. "You've *always* been the caretaker. I should know, sir. I've always been here. The same manager hired us both, at the same time. Is it all right, sir?"

Jack gulped at his drink. His head was swirling. "Mr. Ulman."

"I know no one by that name, sir."

"But he—"

"The manager." Grady said. "The *home*, sir. Surely you realize who hired you, sir."

"No," he said thickly. "No, I—"

"I believe you must take it up further with your son, Mr. Torrance, sir. He understands everything, although he hasn't enlightened you. Rather naughty of him. If I may be so bold, sir. In fact, he's crossed you at almost every turn, hasn't he? And him not yet six."

"Yes," Jack said. "He has." There was another wave of laughter from behind them.

He needs to be corrected, if you don't mind me saying so. He

needs a good talking to, and perhaps a bit more. My own girls sir didn't care for the Overlook at first. One of them actually stole a pack of my matches and tried to burn it down. I corrected them. I corrected them most kindly. And when my wife tried to stop me from doing my duty I corrected her. He offered Jack a bland, meaningless smile. "I find it a sad but true fact that women rarely understand a father's responsibility to his children. Husbands and fathers do have certain responsibilities, don't they, sir?"

"Yes," Jack said.

"They didn't love the Overlook as I did," Grady said, beginning to make him another drink. Silver bubbles rose in the upended gin bottle. "Just as your son and wife don't love it . . . not at present, anyway. But they will come to love it. You must show them the error of their ways, Mr. Torrance. Do you agree?"

"Yes, I do."

He did see. He had been too easy with them. Husbands and fathers did have certain responsibilities. Father knows Best. They did not understand. That in itself was no crime, but they were *wilfully* not understanding. He was not ordinarily a harsh man. But he did believe in punishment. And if his son and his wife had *wilfully* set themselves against his wishes, *against the things he knew were best for them*, then didn't he have a certain duty?

"A thankless child is sharper than a serpent's tooth," Grady said, handing him his drink. "I do believe that the manager could bring your son into line. And your wife would shortly follow. Do you agree, sir?"

He was suddenly uncertain. I . . . but . . . if they could just leave . . . I mean, after all, it's me the manager wants, isn't it? It must be. Because—"Because why?" He should know but suddenly he didn't. Oh, his poor brain was *wimpering*.

"Bad dog." Derwent was saying loudly to a counterpoint of laughter. "Bad dog to pick up on the floor."

"Of course you know," Grady said, leaning confidentially over the cart, "your son is attempting to bring an outside party into it. Your son has a very great talent, one that the manager could use to even further improve the Overlook in further . . . *enrichment*, shall we say? But your son is attempting to use that very talent against us. He is *wilful*, Mr. Torrance, sir. *Wilful*."

"Outside party?" Jack asked stupidly.

Grady nodded.

"Who?"

"A nigger," Grady said. "A nigger cook."

"Ha loann?"

"I believe that is his name, sir, yes."

Another burst of laughter from behind them was followed by Roger saying something in a whining, protesting voice.

"Yes! Yes! Yes!" Derwent began to chant. The others around him took it up, but before Jack could hear what they wanted Roger to do now, the band began to play again—the tune was "Tuxedo Junction" with a lot of mellow sax in it, but not much soul.

(Soul? Soul hasn't even been invented yet. Or has it?)

(A nigger . . . a nigger cook.)

He opened his mouth to speak, not knowing what might come out. What did was

"I was told you hadn't finished high school! But you don't talk like an uneducated man."

"It's true that I left organized education very early, sir. But the manager takes care of his help. He finds that it pays. Education always pays, don't you agree, sir?"

"Yes," Jack said dazedly.

For instance, you show a great interest in learning more about the Overlook Hotel. Very wise of you, sir. Very noble. A certain scrapbook was left in the basement for you to find."

"By whom?" Jack asked eagerly.

By the manager, of course. Certain other materials could be put at your disposal, if you wished them."

"I do. Very much." He tried to control the eagerness in his voice and failed miserably.

"You're a true scholar," Grady said. "Pursue the topic to the end. Exhaust all sources." He dipped his low-browed head, pulled out the lapel of his white mess jacket, and bluffed his knuckles at a spot of dirt that was invisible to Jack.

"And the manager puts no strings on his largess," Grady went on. "No at all. Look at me, a tenth-grade dropout. I sink how much further you yourself could go in the Overlook's organizational structure. Perhaps . . . in time . . . to be very top."

"Really?" Jack whispered.

"But that's really up to your son to decide, isn't it?" Grady

asked, raising his eyebrows. The delicate gesture went oddly with his brows themselves, which were bushy and somehow savage.

Up to Darny?" Jack frowned at Grady. "No, of course not. I wouldn't allow my son to make decisions concerning my career. Not at all. What do you make me for?"

"A dedicated man," Grady said warmly. "Perhaps I put it badly, sir. Let us say that your future here is contingent upon how you decide to deal with your son's waywardness."

"I make my own decisions," Jack whispered.

"But you must deal with him."

"I will."

"Firmly."

"I will."

"A man who cannot control his own family holds very little interest for our manager. A man who cannot guide the courses of his own wife and son can hardly be expected to guide himself, let alone assume a position of responsibility in an operation of this magnitude. He—"

"I said I can handle him." Jack shouted suddenly, enraged.

"Tuxedo Junction" had just concluded and a new tune hadn't begun. His shout fell perfectly into the gap and conversation suddenly ceased behind him. His skin suddenly felt hot all over. He became fixedly positive that everyone was staring at him. They had finished with Roger and would now commence with him. Roll over. Sit up. Pay dead. If you play the game with us, we'll play the game with you. Position of responsibility. They wanted him to sacrifice his son.

(—Now he follows Harry everywhere, wagging his bull terrier behind him—)

(Roll over. Pay dead. Chastise your son.)

"Right, this way, sir," Grady was saying. "Something that might interest you."

The conversation had begun again, rising and dropping to its own rhythm, weaving in and out of the band music, now doing a swing version of Lennon and McCartney's "Ticket to Ride."

(I've heard better over supermarket loudspeakers.)

He giggled foolishly. He looked down at his left hand and saw there was another drink in it half full. He emptied it at a gulp.

Now he was standing on top of the mantle piece, the heat from

the crackling fire that had been and in the hearth warming his legs.

(*in fire? in August? yes and no all times are one*)

There was a clock under a glass dome, flanked by two carved ivory elephants. Its hands stood at a minute to midnight. He gazed at it blearily. Had this been what Grady wanted him to see? He turned around to ask, but Grady had left him.

Halfway through "Ticket to Ride," the band wound up in a brassy flourish.

"The hour is at hand!" Horace Derwent proclaimed. "Masking! Unmask! Unmask!"

He tried to turn again, to see what famous faces were hidden beneath the glitter and paint and masks, but he was frozen now, unable to look away from the clock—its hands had come together and pointed straight up.

Unmask! Unmask! The chant went up.

The clock began to cume delicately. Along the steel runner below the clockface, from the left and right, two figures advanced. Jack watched, fascinated, the unmasking forgotten. Clockwork whirred. Cogs turned and meshed, brass warmly glowing. The balance wheel rocked back and forth precisely.

One of the figures was a man standing on tiptoe, with what looked like a tiny cloth clasper in his hands. The other was a small boy wearing a dunce cap. The clockwork figures glistened fantastically precise. Across the front of the boy's dunce cap he could read the engraved word FOOL.

The two figures slipped onto the opposing ends of a steel axis bar. Somewhere, linking on and on, were the strains of a Strauss waltz. An insane commercial jingle began to run through his mind to the tune *Buy dog food rowl-rowl, rowl-rowl, buy dog food...*

The steel mallet in the clockwork maddy's hands came down on the boy's head. The clockwork son crumpled forward. The mallet rose and fell, rose and fell. The boy's upper teeth, protruding, began to falter. The boy sagged from his croak to a prone position. And still the hammer rose and fell to the right, picking up all of the Strauss melody, and it seemed that he could see the man's face, working and knotting and constricting, could see the

clockwork daddy's mouth opening and closing as he berated the unconscious, bloodsoaked figure of the son.

A spot of red flew up against the inside of the glass dome.

Another followed. Two more splattered beside it.

Now the red liquid was spraying up like an obscene rain shower striking the glass sides of the dome and running, obscuring what was going on inside and flecked through the scarlet were tiny gray ribbons of tissue, fragments of bone and brain. And so he could see the hammer rising and falling as the clockwork continued to turn and the cogs continued to mesh the gears and teeth of this cunningly made machine.

Unmask! Unmask! Derwent was screaming behind him, and somewhere a dog was howling in human tones.

(But clockwork can't bleed, clockwork can't bleed.)

The entire dome was splashed with blood. He could see it everywhere but nothing else. Thank God he could see nothing else. At least he thought he would be sick because he could hear the hammerblows striking, could hear them through the glass just as he could hear the phrases of "The Blue Danube." But the sounds were no longer the mechanical *tick tick tick* noises of a mechanical hammer striking a mechanical head but the soft and squishy thudding sounds of a real hammer smacking down and chacking into a springy muddy run. A run that he could hear.

UNMASK!

the Red Death bent slowly forward.

With a miserable rising scream, he turned away from the clockwork's hands outstretched, his feet stumbling against one another like wooden blocks as he begged them to stop, to take him. Danny Wendy to take the whole world if they would but not to stop and leave him a little solitary in the night.

The ballroom was empty.

The chairs with their springy legs were tiered on tables covered with plastic dust drops. The red rug with its golden tracks was back on the dance floor, protecting the polished hardwood surface. The bandstand was deserted except for a disassembled microphone stand and a dusty guitar leaning against the wall. Cold morning light went glimmering through the high windows.

His head was a red ring he had cut out with a circular

back to the mantlepiece his drink was gone. There were only the ivory elephants . . . and the clock.

He stumbled back across the cold, shadowy lobby and through the dining room. His foot hooked around a table leg and he fell full length, upsetting the table with a clatter. He struck his nose hard on the floor and it began to bleed. He got up, snuffing back blood and wiping his nose with the back of his hand. He crossed to the Colorado Lounge and shoved through the hawking doors, waving them fly back and bang on the walls.

The place was empty . . . but the bar was fully stocked. God be praised. Glasses and the silver edging on jewels glowed warmly in the dark.

Once, he remembered, a very long time ago he had been angry that there was no backbar mirror. Now he was glad. Looking into it he would have seen lost another drink fresh off the wagon, bloody nose, cracked shirt, hair rumpled, cheeks stubbly.

(This is what it's like to stick your whole hand into the nest.)

Loneliness surged over him suddenly and complicity. He cried out with sudden wretchedness and honestly wished he were dead. His wife and son were upstairs with the door locked against them. The others had all left. The party was over.

He lurched forward again, reaching the bar.

"Lloyd, where the fuck are you?" he screamed.

There was no answer. In his well-padded
(cush)

chair his words did not even echo back to give him any sort of company.

"Grady!"

No answer. Only the bottles, standing idly at attention.

(Ride over. Pay your Faith. Pay dead. Sit up. Lay down.)

Never mind, I'll do myself good again.

Laid away over the bar he lost his balance and pitched forward hitting his head a muffled blow on the floor. He got up on his hands and knees, his eyeballs moving disjointed from sockets in a fuzzy matrix of sounds coming from his mouth. Then he collapsed, his face turned to one side, breathing in harsh snores.

Outside the wind whirled louder, driving the thickening snow before it. It was 8:30 A.M.

STAPLETON AIRPORT, DENVER

At 8:31 A.M. MSF, a woman on TWA's Flight 196 burst into tears and began to beg. To begle her own opinion, which was perhaps unwarranted among some of the other passengers (or even the crew, for that matter) that the plane was going to crash.

The sharp-faced woman next to Haldeman looked up from her book and offered a brief character analysis: "Nervy" and went back to her book. She had allowed two screwdrivers during the flight but they seemed not to have thawed her at all.

"It's going to crash," the woman was crying at last. "Oh, I just know it is!"

A stewardess turned over her seat and squatted beside her. Haldeman thought of himself as a very nervous stewardess and a very nervous crew member. The stewardess seemed a little squat with a yellow face of grace. It was a rare and wonderful talent. He thought about how while the stewardess talked so calmly and so gently to him while she was talking to her bit by bit.

Haldeman didn't know about anyone else on 96 but he personally was a man so nervous enough to sit peacocks. Outside the window there was nothing to be seen but a building curtain of white. The plane rocked sickeningly from side to side with gusts of air coming from everywhere. The engines were cranked up to provide partial compensation and as a result the floor was vibrating under their feet. There were several people moaning. The first behind them, one stewardess had gone back with a half full of fresh snack bags, and a man three rows in front of Haldeman had snatched into his *National Observer* and had grinned arrogantly at the stewardess who came to help him lean up. "That's all right," she commented. "That's how I feel about this *Reader's Digest*."

Haldeman had however, after he was able to survive with two

happened. They had been flying against bad headwinds most of the way; the weather over Denver had worsened suddenly and unexpectedly, and now it was just a little late to divert for someplace where the weather was better. Fern's don't fail me now.

Badass-boy, this is some tucked-up cavalry charge.

The stewardess seemed to have succeeded in curbing the worst of the woman's hysterics. She was snuffling and hunking into a lace handkerchief but had ceased broadcasting her opinions about the flight's possible conclusion to the cabin at large. The stew gave her a final pat on the shoulder and stood up just as the 747 gave its worst lurch yet. The stewardess stumbled backward and landed in the lap of the man who had whoopsed into his paper, exposing a lovely length of nyloned thigh. The man blinked and then patted her kindly on the shoulder. She smiled back, but Halorann thought the smile was showing. It had been one heck of a hard flight this morning.

There was a little ping as the NO SMOKING light reappeared.

"This is the captain speaking," a soft, slightly southern voice informed them. "We're ready to begin our descent to Stapleton International Airport. It's been a rough flight, for which I apologize. The landing may be a bit rough also, but we anticipate no real difficulty. Please observe the FASTEN SEAT BELTS and NO SMOKING signs, and we hope you enjoy your stay in the Denver metro area. And we also hope—"

Another hard bump rocked the plane and then dropped her with a sickening elevator plunge. Halorann's stomach did a greasy hernyope. Several people—not all women by any means—screamed.

"That we'll see you again on another TWA flight real soon."

"Not bloody likely," someone behind Halorann said.

"So sorry," the sharp-faced woman next to Halorann remarked, putting a matchbook cover into her book and shutting it as the plane began to descend. "When one has seen the horrors of a dirty little war—as you have—or sensed the degrading vulgarity of CIA dollar-dip-may-it-never-happen—as I have—a rough landing pales into insignificance. Am I right, Mr. Halorann?"

"As rain, ma'am," he said, and looked back out into the wildly blowing snow.

"It was your saved plane reaching to all of this, if I might inquire?"

"Oh, my head's fine," Hajarann said. "It's just my stomach that's a little queasy."

"A shame!" She responded hot back.

As they descended through the impenetrable clouds of snow Hajarann thought of a crash that had occurred at Boston's Logan Airport a few years ago. The conditions had been similar, only fog instead of snow had reduced visibility to zero. The plane had caught its side-collision on a retaining wall near the end of the landing strip. What had been left of the eighty-nine people aboard hadn't looked much different from a Hamburger Helper casserole.

He wasn't in mind so much if it was just himself. He was pretty much alone in the world now, and attendance at his funeral would be mostly held down to the people he had worked with and that old teenage Muslim who would at least drink to him. But the boy—the boy was depending on him. He was maybe all the help that child could expect, and he didn't like the way the boy's last call had been snapped off. He kept thinking of the way those rough animals had seemed to move.

A thin white hand appeared over his.

The woman with the sharp face had taken off her glasses. With you, them berries always seemed much softer.

"It will be all right," she said.

Hajarann made a smile and nodded.

As advertised the plane came down hard, rebounding with the cushion force enough to knock most of the magazines out of the racks. The floor and to send plastic trays cascading out of the galley like oversized playing cards. No one screamed, but Hajarann heard several sets of teeth clacking violently together like gypsy castanets.

Then the left engines rose to a high thraxing, the port and as they dropped in volume the port's side speakers came perhaps not completely steady, came over the intercom system. "Ladies and gentlemen, we have landed at Saperon Airport. Please remain in your seats until the plane has come to a complete stop at the terminal. Thank you."

The woman beside Hajarann closed her book and turned a sideways eye. "We've to go together day, Mr. Hajarann."

"Ma'am, we are not done yet, but I see no, yet."

"True Very true Would you care to have a drink in the lounge with me?"

I would, but I have an appointment to keep."

"Pressing?"

Very pressing. Halvorann said gravely.

"Something that will improve the general situation in some small way, I hope."

I hope so too. Halvorann said, and smiled. She smiled back at him, ten years dropping silently from her face as she did so.

* * *

Because he had only the flight bag he'd carried for luggage Halvorann beat the crowd to the Hertz desk on the lower level. Outside the smoked glass windows he could see the snow still falling steadily. The gusting wind drove white clouds of it back and forth, and the people walking across to the parking area were struggling against it. One man lost his hat and Halvorann could commiserate with him as it whirled high, wide, and handsome. The man stared after it and Halvorann thought

(Aw, just forget it now. That homburg ain't coming down and it gets to Arizona.)

On the heels of that thought

(If it's this bad in Denver what's it got to be like west of Boulder?)

Best not to think about that, maybe.

"Can I help you, sir?" a girl in Hertz yellow asked him.

"If you got a car, you can help me," he said with a big grin.

For a heavier-than-average charge he was able to get a heavier-than-average car, a silver and black Buick Electra. He was thinking of the winding mountain roads, rather than style, he would still have to stop somewhere along the way and get chains put on. He wouldn't get far without them.

"How bad is it?" she asked as she handed him the rental agreement to sign.

"They say it's the worst storm since 1969," she answered brightly. "Do you have far to drive, sir?"

"Farther than I'd like."

"If you'd like, sir, I can phone ahead to the Texaco stop on the Route 270 junction. They'll put chains on for you."

"That would be a great blessing, dear."

She picked up the phone and made the call. "They'll be expecting you."

"Thank you much."

Leaving his desk, he saw the shame-faced woman standing on the sidewalk, looking at him and armed with a pair of ice-cream cones. She was still shaking her head. He hurriedly walked at her as he would by some accident, snatched a cone and gave it to her as a peace sign. *(shame)*

He hurriedly passed several cars at a stop and satisfied himself that he had left her and that she was alone. But a man had been watching her. He was sorry and sad for that fish-woman about having a secret place to be heard. He hurriedly washed his face and as he went out into the snowing wind and snow he thought she washed him the same dirty way.

* * *

The cold getting prying in the air as the service station was a roadside one, but Heidermann's people the man at work in the garage had a extra car to get him set up a little way on the way out. It was a half-quarter of eight before he was actually on the road. The windshield wipers were working on the clouds of mist with useless motion, only on the truck's big wheels.

The tarpaper was a mess. Even with the chains he could get no faster than thirty. Cars had gone off the road at crazy angles, and on several of the graves traffic was barely struggling along, some tires spinning helplessly in the drifting powder. It was the first big storm of the winter down here in the lowlands, if you could call a mile above sea-level low, and it was a mother. Many of them were unprepared, common enough, but Heidermann still found himself cursing them as he munched around them, peering in on his snow-crusted outside mirror to be sure nothing was

(Dashing through the snow . . .)

coming up in the off-hand lane to cream his black ass.

There was more black waiting for him at the Route 36 entrance ramp. Route 36, the Denver Boulder Turnpike, also goes west to Estes Park, where it connects with Route 7. That road, also known as the Upward Highway, goes through Sidewinder, passes the Overlook Hotel, and finally winds down the Western Slope and into Utah.

The clearance ramp had been blocked by an overturned semi. Bright-burning flares had been scattered around it like birthday candles on some idiot child's cake.

He came to a stop and roared his window down. A cop wearing a fur Cossack hat jammed down over his ears gestured with one gloved hand toward the flow of traffic moving north on 25.

"You can't get up here!" he bawled to Halorann over the wind. "Go down two exits, get on 91, and connect with 36 at Broomfield!"

"I think I could get around him on the left!" Halorann shouted back. "That's twenty miles out of my way, what you're rappin'!"

"I'll rap your friggin' head!" the cop shouted back. "This ramp's closed!"

Halorann backed up, waited for a break in traffic, and connected on his way up Route 25. The signs informed him he was only a hundred miles to Cheyenne, Wyoming. If he didn't look out for his ramp, he'd wind up there.

He inched his speed up to thirty-five, dared no more, as already snow was threatening to clog his wiper blades and the traffic patterns were decidedly crazy. Twenty-mile detour. He cursed, and the feeling that time was growing shorter for the boy wavered up on him again, nearly suffocating with its urgency. And at the same time he felt a fatalistic certainty that he would not be coming back from this trip.

He turned on the radio, dialed past Christmas ads, and found a weather forecast.

"Six inches a day, and another foot is expected in the Denver metro area by tonight. Local and state police urge you not to take your car out of the garage unless it's absolutely necessary, and warn that most mountain passes have already been closed. So stay home and wax up your bumper and keep tuned to . . ."

"Thanks, mother!" Halorann said, and arched the radio off savagely.

WENDY

Around noon after Danny had gone to the bathroom to use the toilet, Wendy took the towel-wrapped knife from under her pillow, put it in the pocket of her bathrobe, and went over to the bathroom door.

"Danny?"

"What?"

"I'm going down to make us some lunch. 'Kay?"

"Okay. Do you want me to come down?"

"No. I'll bring it up. How about a chicken salad and some soup?"

"Sure."

She hesitated outside the closed door a moment longer. "Danny, are you sure it's okay?"

"Yeah," he said. "Just be careful."

"Where's your father? Do you know?"

His voice came back, curiously flat. "No. But it's okay."

She stifled an urge to keep asking, to keep picking around the edges of the thing. The thing was there; they knew what it was, picking at it was only going to frighten Danny more . . . and herself.

Jack had lost his mind. They had sat together on Danny's cot as the storm began to pick up about and meanness around eight o'clock this morning and had listened to him downstairs, braving and stumbling from one place to another. Most of it had seemed to come from the bathroom. Jack singing tuneless bits of song, Jack holding up one side of an argument, Jack screaming loudly at one point, freezing both of their faces as they stared into one another's eyes. For many they had heard him stumbling back across the lobby, and Wendy thought she had heard a loud banging noise as if he had fallen down or pushed a door violently open. Since eight thirty or so—three and a half hours now—there had been only silence.

She went down the short hall, turned into the main lobby, and hurried down the stairs. She stood on the first-floor landing looking down into the lobby. It appeared deserted, but the gray and snowy day had left much of the big room in shadow, so it could be wrong. Jack could be behind a short curtain, maybe behind the registration desk. . . . Waiting for her to come down. . . .

She wet her lips, "Jack?

No answer.

Her hand found the handle of the knife and she began to go down. She had seen the end of her marriage many times in her voice in Jack's death at the scene of a drunken car accident (a regular vision in the dark two or three of Stovington mornings) and occasionally in daydreams of being discovered by another man, a soap opera Galahad who would sweep Danny and her out to the saddle of his snow-white charger and take them away. But she had never envisioned herself prowling halls and staircases like a nervous felon, with a knife clasped in one hand to use against Jack.

A wave of despair struck through her at the thought and she had to stop halfway down the stairs and holding the railing, afraid her knees would buckle.

(Admit it. It isn't just Jack, he's not the one soul thing on which you can hang the other things on, the things you can't believe and yet are being forced to believe, that thing about the floor, the party favor in the elevator, the mask.)

She tried to stop the thought but it was too late.

(and the voices.)

Because from time to time it had not seemed that there was a solitary crazy man below them shouting at and holding conversations with the phantoms in his own crumbling mind. From time to time, like a radio signal fading in and out, she had heard, or thought she had, other voices and music and laughter. At one moment she would hear Jack holding a conversation with someone named Grady (the name was vaguely familiar to her but she made no actual connection), making statements and asking questions into silence, yet speaking loudly as if to make himself heard over a steady background racket. And then, eerily, other sounds would be there, seeming to slip into place—a dance band, people clapping, a man with an amused yet authoritative voice who

seemed to be trying to persuade somebody to make a speech. For a portion of thirty seconds so a minute she would hear his long enough to grow faint with terror and then it would be gone again and she would only hear Jack talking in that commanding yet slightly warren way she remembered as his drunk speaking voice. But there was nothing in the hotel to drink except cooking sherry. Was it that high? Yes, but if she could imagine that the hotel was full of voices and music, couldn't Jack imagine that he was drunk? She didn't like that thought. Not at all.

Wendy reached the lobby and looked around. The velvet rope that had cordoned off the ballroom had been taken down, the steel post it had been clipped to had been knocked over, as if someone had carelessly bumped it going by. Moreover the light fell through the open door onto the lobby rug from the ballroom's high, narrow windows. Hearing thumping, she went to the open ballroom doors and looked in. It was empty and silent. The only sound that curious subterranean echo that seems to linger in all large rooms, from the largest cathedral to the smallest home-owning parlor.

She went back to the registration desk and stood undecided for a moment, listening to the wind howl outside. It was the worst storm so far, and it was still picking up force. Somewhere on the west side a shower door had broken and the shower banged back and forth with a steady flat cracking sound, like a shooting gallery with only one customer.

(Jack, our real, should take care of that. Before something gets in.)

What would she do if he came at her right now, she wondered. If he should pop up from behind the dark, varnished registration desk with its pile of triplicate forms and its little silver-plated bell like some murderous jack-in-the-box pun intended, a grinning jack-in-the-box with a cleaver in one hand and no sense at all left behind his eyes. Would she stand frozen with terror, or was there enough of the primal mother in her to fight him for her son until one of them was dead? She didn't know. The very thought made her sick—made her see that her whole life had been a long and easy dream to lull her helplessly into his waxing nightmare. She was lost. When trouble came, she slept. Her past was unremarkable. She had never been tried in fire. Now the trial was upon her,

the soup was hot. She put the pot on a large tray with silverware, two bowls, two plates, the salt and pepper shakers. When she only had pulled six out, she lay down on one of the plates and covered it.

(The book then was very long. Turn. The kitchen is full of thought and memory. Through the week she wrote to her hundred dollars.)

She stepped on the lobby side of the typewriter desk and set the tray down beside the silver box. Lately, it would be like this so far, this was like some surreal game of hide-and-seek.

She stood in the shadowy lobby, frowning in thought.

Don't push the facts away that time, girl. There are certain realities as lunatic as this situation may seem. One of them is that you may be the only responsible person left in this grotesque place. You have a life-long-on-six son to look out for. And your husband, whatever has happened to him and no matter how dangerous he may be, maybe he's part of your responsibility too.

And even if he isn't, consider this. Today is December tenth. You could be stuck up here another four months if a ranger doesn't happen by. Then they do start to wonder why they haven't heard from us in the CB, no one is going to come today or tomorrow, maybe not for weeks. Are you going to

spend a month sneaking down to get meals with a knife in your pocket and running at every shadow? Do you really think you can avoid Jack for a month? Do you think you can keep Jack out of the upstairs quarters if he wants to get in? He has the passkey and one hard kick would snap the bars.)

Leaving the tray on the desk, she walked slowly down to the dining room and looked in. It was deserted. There was one table with the chairs set up around it, the table they had been eating at until the dining room's emptiness began to freak them out.

"Jack?" she called hesitantly.

At that moment the wind rose in a gust, driving snow against the shutters, but it seemed to her that there had been something. A muffled sort of groan.

"Jack?"

No returning sound this time, but her eyes fell on something beneath the batwing doors of the Colorado Lounge, something that gleamed faintly in the subdued light. Jack's cigarette lighter.

Plucking up her courage, she crossed to the batwings and pushed them open. The smell of gin was so strong that her breath snagged in her throat. It wasn't even right to call it a smell, it was a positive rock. But the side ves were empty. Where in God's name had he found it? A bottle hidden at the back of one of the cupboards? *Where?*

There was another gin too low and fuzzy but perfectly audible this time. Wendy walked slowly to the bar.

"Jack?"

No answer.

She looked over the bar and there he was, sprawled out on the floor in a stupor. Drunk as a lord, by the smell. He must have tried to go right over the top and lost his balance. A wonder he hadn't broken his neck. An old proverb recurred to her. God looks after drunks and the children. Amen.

Yet she was not angry with him, looking down at him she thought he looked like a horribly overtired little boy who had tried to do too much and had fallen asleep in the middle of the living room floor. He had stopped drinking and it was not Jack who had made the decision to start again, there had been no liquor for him to start with—so where had it come from?

Resting at every five or six feet along the horseshoe-shaped bar there were wine bottles wrapped in straw, their mouths plugged with canules. Supposed to look bohemian, she supposed. She picked one up and shook it, half-expecting to hear the splash of gin inside it.

(new wine in old bottles)

but here was no ting. She set it back down.

Jack was sitting. She went around the bar, found the gate and walked back on the inside to where Jack lay, pausing only to look at the gleaming chromom taps. They were dry but when she passed close to them she could smell beer, wet and new like a fine mist.

As she reached Jack he rolled over, opened his eyes, and looked up at her. For a moment his gaze was a very blank, and then it cleared.

"Wendy?" he asked. "That you?"

"Yes," she said. "Do you think you can make upstairs? or you prefer to stay and tell me. Jack, where did you—"

His hand closed brutally around her ankle.

"Jack! What are you—"

"Gotcha!" he said, and began to grin. There was a stale odor of piss and pisses all about him, but seemed to set off an old terror in her, a worse terror than any he could provide by itself. A distant part of her thought that the worst thing was that it had all come back to this, she and her stakeholder husband.

"Jack, I want to help."

Oh yeah. You and Danny only want to help. The grip on her knee was crushing now. Still holding onto her, Jack was getting shakier. His knees. "You wanted to help us and right out of here. But now . . . *gotcha!*"

"Jack, you're hurting my ankle—"

I hurt more than your ankle, you bitch.

The wound stung her so completely that she made no effort to move when he let go of her ankle and stumbled down his knees to his feet, where he stood swaying in front of her.

"You never loved me," he said. "You want us to leave because you know that'll be the end of me. Did you ever think about my responsibilities?" No. I guess to fuck you and to. And you ever think about the ways to drag me down. You're just like my mother, you milksop bitch!"

Stop it, she said, crying. "You don't know what you're saying. You're drunk. I don't know how, but you're drunk."

Oh I know. I know now. You and him. That little pup up there. The way you're planning together. I just can't ignore it.

No, no. We never planned anything. What are you talking about?

It is now, he screamed. Oh, I know how you do it. I guess I know that. When I say, "We're going to stay here and I'm going to do this job," you say, "Yes, dear," and he says, "Yes, Daddy," and then you lay out your plans. You planned to use the show money. You planned that. But I knew. I figured it out. *But you can't. I know. I know. I figured it out. Did you think I was stupid?*

She stared at him, unable to speak now. He was going to kill her, and then he was going to kill Danny. That maybe the best way to be saved and allowed to live. He set just like that other caretaker. Just like

(Grady.)

With almost swooning horror she realized at last what it was that Jack had been conversing with in the bathroom.

"You turned my son against me. That was the worst." His face sagged into lines of self-pity. "My little boy. Now he hates me, too. You saw to that. That was your plan all along, wasn't it? You've always been jealous, haven't you? Just like your mother. You could have said so unless you had a little more could you? *Could you?*"

She couldn't talk.

"Well, I'll fix you." He said, and tried to put his hands around her throat.

She took a step backward, then another, and he stumbled against her. She remembered the knife in the pocket of her robe and groped for it, but now his left arm had swept around her, pinning her arm against her side. She could smell sharp gin and the sour odor of his sweat.

"Have to be punished," he was grunting. "Chastised. Chastised . . . harshly."

His right hand found her throat.

As her breath stopped, pure panic took over. His left hand joined his right and now the knife was free to her own hand, but she forgot about it. Both of her hands came up and began to work helplessly at his stronger fingers.

Mommy! Danny shrieked from somewhere. "*Daddy, stop! You're hurting Mommy!*" He screamed, pouring a high and crazy sound that she heard from far off.

Red flashes of light began to flicker from her eyes like battle dancers. The room grew darker. She saw her son chamber up on the bar and throw himself at Jack's shoulders. Suddenly one of the hands that had been crushing her throat was gone as Jack pulled Danny away with a snarl. The boy fell back against the empty shelves and dropped to the floor, dazed. The hand was on her throat again. The red flashes began to turn black.

Danny was crying weakly. Her chest was burning. Jack was shouting into her ear. "I'll fix you. Goddam you. I'll show you what's boss around here. I'll show you."

But all sound as were falling down as long Jack pounded. Her struggles began to weaken. One of her hands slid away from his

and dropped slowly until the arm was stretched out at right angles to her body, the hand dangling limply from the wrist like the hand of a drowning woman.

It touched a bottle—one of the straw-wrapped wine bottles that served as decorative candleholders.

Sightlessly, with the last of her strength, she gripped the bottle's neck and found it feeling the greasy beads of wax against her hand.

(and O God if it slips)

She brought it up and then down, praying for aim, knowing that if it only struck his shoulder or upper arm she was dead.

But the bottle came down squarely on Jack Torrance's head, the glass shattering violently inside the straw. The base of it was thick and heavy and it made a sound against his skull like a medicine ball dropped on a hardwood floor. He rocked back on his heels, his eyes rolling up in their sockets. The pressure on her throat loosened, then gave way entirely. He put his hands out as if to steady himself and then crashed over on his back.

Wendy drew a long, sobbing breath. She almost fell before she clutched the edge of the bar and managed to hold herself up. Consciousness wavered in and out. She could hear Danny crying but she had no idea where he was. It sounded like crying in an echo chamber. Dimly she saw dime-sized drops of blood falling to the dark surface of the bar from her nose, she thought. She cleared her throat and spat on the floor. It sent a wave of agony up the column of her throat but the agony subsided to a steady, crushing pain—just bearable.

Little by little, she managed to get control of herself.

She let go of the bar, turned around, and saw Jack lying face length, the shattered bottle beside him. He looked like a felled giant. Danny was crouched below the lounge's cash register, both hands in his mouth, staring at his unconscious father.

Wendy went to him unsteadily and touched his shoulder. Danny cringed away from her.

"Danny, listen to me—"

"No, no," he muttered in a husky old man's voice. "Daddy hurt you. You hurt Daddy. Daddy hurt you. I want to go to sleep. Daddy wants to go to sleep."

Danny—

"Sleep, sleep. Nighty-night."

"No!"

Pain ripping up her throat again. She winced against it. But he opened his eyes. They looked at her warily from bluish, shadowed sockets.

She made herself speak calmly, her eyes never leaving his. Her voice was low and husky, almost a whisper. "I hurt to talk. I listen to me, Danny. It wasn't your daddy trying to hurt me. And I didn't want to hurt him. The hotel has gotten into him. Danny. *The Overlook has gotten into your daddy.* Do you understand me?"

Some kind of knowledge came slowly back into Danny's eyes.

"The Bad Stuff," he whispered. "There was none of it here before, was there?"

"No. The hotel put it here. The . . ." She broke off with a fit of coughing and spat out more blood. Her throat already felt pulled to twice its size. The note made him drink it. "Did you hear those people he was talking to this morning?"

"Yes . . . the hotel people . . ."

I heard them too. And that means the hotel's getting stronger. It wants to hurt all of us. But I think . . . I hope . . . that it can only do that through your daddy. He was the only one it could catch. Are you understanding me, Danny? It's desperately important that you understand."

"The hotel cough!" Danny said, looking at Jack and groaning helplessly.

I know you love your daddy. I do too. We have to remember that the hotel is trying to hurt him as much as it is us. And she was convinced that was true. More, she thought that Danny might be the one the hotel really wanted, the reason it was going so far.

Maybe the reason it was able to go so far. It might even be that in some unknown fashion it was Danny's shine that was powering it, the way a battery powers the electrical equipment in a car . . . the way a battery gets a car to start. If they got out of here, the Overlook might subside to its old semi-sentient state, able to do no more than present penny-dreadful horror stories to the more psychically aware guests who entered it. Without Danny it was not much more than an amusement park haunted house where a guest or two might hear rappings or the phantom

sounds of a masquerade party, or see an occasional disturbing thing. But if it absorbed Danny—Danny's shine or life-force or spirit—whatever you wanted to call it—would it be then?

The thought made her cold all over.

"I wish Daddy was here too," Danny said, and the tears began to flow again.

"Me too," she said, and hugged Danny gently. "And honey, that's why you've got to help me put your daddy somewhere. Somewhere that the hotel can't make him hurt us and where he can't hurt himself. Then—if your friend Dick comes, or a park ranger—we can take him away. And I think he might be all right again. An old us might be all right. I think there's still a chance for that, if we're strong and brave like you were when you jumped on his back. Do you understand?" She looked at him pleadingly and thought how strange it was she had never seen him when he looked so much like Jack.

"Yes," he said, and nodded. "I think—if we can get away from here—everything will be like it was. Where could we put him?"

"The pantry. There's food in there and a good strong bolt on the outside. It's warm. And we can get up the things from the refrigerator and the freezer. There will be plenty for all three of us until help comes."

"Do we do it now?"

"Yes, right now. Before he wakes up."

Danny put the burgate up while she loaded Jack's hands on his chest, and listened to his breathing for a moment. It was slow and regular. From the smile of him she thought he must have drunk a great deal—and he was out of the habit. She thought it might be liquor as much as the crack on the head which she believed had put him out.

She picked up his legs and began to drag him along the floor. She had been married to him for nearly seven years; he had been on top of her countless times—in the thousands—and she had never realized how heavy he was. Her breath whistled past her ears and out of her throat. Nevertheless, she felt better than she had in days. She was alive. Having just brushed so close to death that was precious. And Jack was alive too. By blind luck rather

that plan they had perhaps found the only way that would bring them all safely out.

Panting heavily, she paused a moment, holding Jack's feet against her hips. The surroundings reminded her of the sea and a seagull's cry in *Treasure Island* after old Pew had passed him the Black Spot. *He's do or die.*

And then she remembered, unconsciously, that the old seadog had dropped dead mere seconds later.

"Are you all right, Mommy?" as he asked, "is he too heavy?"

"I'll manage." She began to drag him again. Danny was beside Jack. One of his hands had fallen off his chest, and Danny replaced it gently, with love.

"Are you sure, Mommy?"

"Yes. It's the best thing, Danny."

"It's like putting him in jail."

"Only for awhile."

"Okay, then. Are you sure you can do it?"

"Yes."

But it was a near thing, at that. Danny had seen cringing in his father's head when they went over the doorsteps, but his hands slipped in Jack's greasy hair as they went into the kitchen. The back of his head struck the wall and Jack began to moan and stir.

"You got to use smoke," Jack muttered quickly. "Now run and get me that gascan."

Wendy and Danny exchanged glances for a moment.

"Help me," she said in a low voice.

For a moment Danny stood as if paralyzed by his father's face, and then he moved jerkily to her side and helped her hold the leg. They dragged him across the kitchen floor in a slight arc, kind of a slow motion, the only sounds the faint insect buzz of the fluorescent lights and the low, unceasing death rattle.

When they reached the pantry Wendy put Jack's feet down and turned to lunge with her boot. Danny shook down at Jack who was lying limp and relaxed again. She saw that had pulled on the back of his pants as they dragged him and a tiny wet trickle. Danny was too dazed to be cruel. He seemed to long to look into the pantry like a war animal, but he was sure with his head down to Mommy. Even upstairs he had known Dad was going to do it. He had heard them arguing in his head.

(If only we could all be out of here. Or if it was a dream I was having, back in Savoydon. If only.)

The bolt was stuck.

Wendy pushed at it as hard as she could, but it wouldn't move. She couldn't retract the goddam bolt. It was stupid and unfair she had opened it with no trouble at all when she had gone in to get the can of soup. Now it wouldn't move, and what was she going to do? They couldn't put him in the walk-in refrigerator; he would freeze or smother to death. But if they left him out and he woke up . . .

Jack stirred again on the floor.

"I'll take care of it," he muttered. "I understand."

"He's waking up, Mommy," Danny warned.

Sobbing now, she yanked at the bolt with both hands.

"Danny?" There was something softly menacing, if not abrupt, in Jack's voice. "That you old doc?"

"Just go to sleep, Daddy," Danny said nervously. "I's bed me, you know."

He looked up at his mother still struggling with the bolt, and saw what was wrong immediately. She had forgotten to rotate the bolt before trying to withdraw it. The little catch was stuck in its notch.

"Here," he said low, and brushed her trembling hands aside; his own were shaking almost as badly. He knocked the catch loose with the heel of his hand and the bolt drew back easily.

"Quick," he said. He looked down. Jack's eyes had fluttered open again and this time Daddy was looking directly at him, his gaze strangely flat and speculative.

"You copied it," Daddy told him. "I know you did. But it's here somewhere. And I'll find it. That I promise you. I'll find it." His words slurred off again.

Wendy pushed the pantry door open with her knee, hardly noticing the pungent odor of dried fruit that wafted out. She picked up Jack's feet again and dragged him in. She was gasping harshly now, at the limit of her strength. As she yanked the chain pull that turned on the light, Jack's eyes fluttered open again.

"What are you doing? Wendy? What are you doing?"

She stepped over him.

He was quick, amazing quick. One hand lashed out and she

had to sidestep and nearly fall out the door to avoid his grasp. Sudd he had caught a handful of her bathrobe and there was a heavy purring noise as it ripped. He was up on his hands and knees now, his hair hanging in his eyes, like some heavy animal. A large dog, or a lion.

"Damn you both! I know what you want. But you're not going to get it. This hotel . . . it's mine. It's mine they want. Me! Me!"

"The door, Danny!" she screamed. "*Shut the door!*"

He pushed the heavy wooden door shut with a slam, just as Jack leaped. The door latched and Jack thudded uselessly against it.

Danny's small hands groped at the bolt. Wendy was too far away to help; the issue of whether he would be locked in or free was going to be decided in two seconds. Danny missed his grip, found it again, and shot the bolt across just as the latch began to jiggle madly up and down below it. Then it stayed up and there was a series of thuds as Jack slammed his shoulder against the door. The bolt, a quarter inch of steel in diameter, showed no signs of loosening. Wendy let her breath out slowly.

"Let me out of here!" Jack raged. "Let me out! Danny, dog-gone it, this is your father and I want to get out. Now do what I tell you!"

Danny's hand moved automatically toward the bolt. Wendy caught it and pressed it between her breasts.

"You mind your daddy, Danny. You do what I say! You do it or I'll give you a hiding you'll never forget. *Open this door or I'll bash your fucking brains in!*"

Danny looked at her pale as window glass.

They could hear his breath tearing in and out behind the half inch of solid oak.

"Wendy, you let me out! Let me out right now! You cheap nickle-plated co-d-cunt bitch! You let me out! I mean it! Let me out of here and I'll let it go. If you don't, I'll mess you up! I mean it! I'll mess you up so bad your own mother would pass you on the street! *Now open this door!*"

Danny moaned. Wendy looked at him and saw he was going to faint in a moment.

"Come on, doc," she said, surprised at the calmness of her own voice. "It's not your daddy talking, remember. It's the hotel."

"Come back here and let me out right NOW!" Jack screamed. There was a terrifying knocking sound as it attacked him inside of the door with his fingernails.

He felt like Danny said "I's he be I I remember." But he could have over his shoulder and his face was cramped and terrified.

47

DANNY

It was three in the afternoon of a long long day.

They were sitting on the high head of their quarters. Danny was turning the purple VW model with the motor sticking out of the sun roof over and over in his hands, compulsively.

They had heard Daddy's batterings at the door all the way across the lobby the batterings and his voice, hoarse and periodically angry in a weakling sort of a way, promising promises of punishment, warning promises promising both of them that they would have to regret betraying him after he had saved his guts out for them over the years.

Danny thought they would no longer be able to hear his parts, but the sounds of his rage carried perfectly up the dumb-waiter shaft. Mommy's face was pale and there were horrible brownish bruises on her neck where Daddy had tried to.

He turned the model over and over in his hands. Daddy's prize for having learned his teaching lessons.

(where Daddy had tried to hug her too late.)

Mommy put some of her music on the little record player, scratchy and full of horns and flares. She smiled at him tiredly. He tried to smile back and failed. Even with the volume turned up loud he thought he could still hear Daddy screaming at them and battering the pantry door like an animal in a zoo cage. What if Daddy had to go to the hospital? What would he do then?

Danny began to cry.

Wendy turned the volume down on the record player at once, held him, rocked him on her lap.

"Danny, love, it will be all right. I will. If Mr. Harrington didn't get your message, someone else will. As soon as the storm is over, no one could get up here would they anyway. Mr. Harrington or anyone else. But when the storm is over, everything will be fine again. We'll leave here. And do you know what we'll do next spring? The three of us?"

Danny shook his head against her breasts. He didn't know. It seemed there could never be spring again.

"We'll go fishing. We'll rent a boat and go fishing, just like we did last year on Chatterton Lake. You and me and your Daddy. And maybe you'll catch a bass for our supper. And maybe we won't catch anything, but we're sure to have a good time."

"I love you, Mommy," he said, and hugged her.

"Oh, Danny, I love you, too."

Outside, the wind whooped and screamed.

* * *

Around four-thirty, just as the day got began to fail, the screams ceased.

They had both been dozing uneasily. Wendy said holding Danny in her arms, and she didn't wake. But Danny did. Somehow the silence was worse, more ominous than the screams and the blows against the strong pantry door. Was Daddy asleep again? Or dead? Or what?

(Did he get out?)

Fifteen minutes later the silence was broken by a hard grinding metallic rattle. There was a heavy grinding, then a mechanical humming. Wendy came awake with a cry.

The elevator was running again.

They listened to it, wide-eyed, hugging each other. It went from floor to floor, the grate rattling back, the brass door swinging open. There was laughter, drunken shouts, occasional screams, and the sounds of breakage.

The Overlook was coming to life around them.

JACK

He sat on the floor of the pantry with his legs out in front of him, a box of Triscuit crackers between them, looking at the clock. He was turning the crackers one by one, not tasting them—only turning them because he had to eat something. When he got out of the clock he was going to need his strength. All of it.

At his precise instant, he thought, he had never felt quite so miserable in his entire life. His mind and body together made up a large writhing mass of pain. His head ached terribly, the sick, job of a hang-over. The attendant symptoms were there, too. His nose itched like a manate rake had taken a swing through it. His ears rung. His heart had an extra-heavy thudding beat like a steam train. In addition, both shoulders ached fiercely from his wiggling himself against the door and his throat felt raw and peeled from useless shouting. He had cut his right hand on the door latch.

And when he got out of here, he was going to kick some ass.

He munches the Triscuits one by one, refusing to give in to his wretched stomach, which wanted to vomit up everything. He thought of the Excedrin in his pocket and decided to wait a bit. His stomach had quieted a bit. No sense swallowing a painkiller if you were going to throw it right back up. Have to use your brain. The celebrated Jack Torrance brain. Aren't you the fellow who once was going to live by his wits? Jack Torrance, best selling author Jack Torrance, acclaimed playwright, and winner of the New York Critics Circle Award, John Torrance, man of letters, esteemed thinker, winner of the Pulitzer Prize at seventy for his trenchant book of memoirs, *My Life in the Twentieth Century*. A, any of that shit boiled down to was living by your wits.

Living by your wits was always knowing where the walrus are.

He put another Triscuit in his mouth and crunched it up.

What if really came down to, he supposed, was that lack of trust in him. Their failure to believe that he knew what was best

for them and how to get it. His wife had tried to usurp him for a while by force.

(sort of)

means they by and by. When her tale him - and who a g object
 tions had been overturned by his own well-reasoned arguments
 she had turned his boy against him, tried to kill him with a bottle
 and then had locked him, of all places, in the goddamned fucking
 pantry.

Still, a small interior voice nagged him.

Yes but where did the liquor come from? Isn't that really the central point? You know what happens when you drink - you know it from bitter experience - when you drink you lose your wits.)

He buried the box of Triscuits across the small room. They struck a shelf of canned goods and fell to the floor. He looked at the box, wiped his lips with his hand, and then looked at his watch. It was almost six-thirty. He had been in here for hours. His wife had locked him in here and he'd been here for fucking hours.

He could begin to sympathize with his father.

The thing he'd never asked himself Jack realized now was exactly what had driven his daddy to drink in the first place. And really - when you came right down to what his old stoner's had been pleased to call the nitty-gritty - hadn't it been the woman he was married to? A minkop sponge of a woman, always dragging silently around the house with an expression of doomed martyrdom on her face? A ball and chain around Daddy's ankle? No, not ball and chain. She had never actively tried to make Daddy a prisoner, the way Wendy had done to him. For Jack's father it must have been more like the fate of McTeague the dentist at the end of Frank Norris's great novel - handcuffed to a dead man in the wasteland. Yes, that was better. Mentally and spiritually dead, his mother had been handcuffed to his father by matrimony. Still, Daddy had tried to do right as he dragged her rotting corpse through life. He had tried to bring the four children up to know right from wrong, to understand discipline, and above all, to respect their father.

Well, they had been ingrates a lot of them. Himself included. And now he was paying the price. His own son had turned out to be

He suddenly held his breath and cocked his head. Somewhere a piano was playing boogie-wogie and people were laughing and clapping along. The sound was muffled through the heavy wooden door, but audible. The song was "Here I Be and 'Tis Time in the Old Town Tonight."

His hands curled helplessly into fists as he tried to restrain himself from battering at the door with them. The party had begun again. The liquor would be flowing freely. Somewhere, dancing with someone else, would be the girl who had felt so madly and so naked under her white silk gown.

"You'd pay for that!" he howled. "Goddam you two, you'd pay! You'd take your goddam medicine for this. I promise you! You—"

"Here, here, now," a mild voice said just outside the door. "No need to shout, old fellow. I can hear you perfectly well."

Jack lurched to his feet.

"Grady? Is that you?"

"Yes, sir. Indeed it is. You appear to have been locked in."

"Let me out, Grady. Quickly."

"I see you can hardly have taken care of the business we discussed, sir. The correction of your wife and son."

"They're the ones who locked me in. Pull the bolt, for God's sake!"

"You let them lock you in?" Grady's voice registered well-bred surprise. "Oh, dear. A woman half your size and a little boy? Hardly sets you off as being of top managerial timber, does it?"

A pulse began to beat in the clockspring of veins at Jack's right temple. "Let me out, Grady. I'll take care of them."

"Will you, indeed, sir? I wonder." Well-bred surprise was replaced by well-bred regret. "I'm pained to say that I doubt it. I—and others—have really come to believe that your heart is not in this, sir. That you haven't the *guts* to be busy for it."

I do! Jack shouted. *I do! I swear it!"*

"You would bring us your son?"

"Yes. Yes!"

"Your wife would object to that very strongly, Mr. Torrance. And she appears to be *just* somewhat stronger than we had imagined. Somewhat more resourceful. She certainly seems to have gotten the better of you."

Grady tittered.

"Perhaps, Mr. Torrance, we should have been dealing with her all along."

"Bring him I swear it," Jack said. His face was against the door now. He was swearing. "She won't object I swear she won't. She won't be able to."

"You would have to kill her I fear," Grady said coldly.

"I do what I have to do. Just *leave me out*."

"You will give your word on this, sir?" Grady persisted.

"My word, my promise, my sacred vow, whatever in hell you want. If you—"

There was a flat snap as the bolt was drawn back. The door shivered open a quarter of an inch. Jack's words and breath halted. For a moment he felt like a dead leaf. He was outside that door.

The feeling passed.

He whispered, "Thank you, Grady. I swear you won't regret it. I swear you won't."

There was no answer. He became aware that all sounds had stopped except for the cold sweeping of the wind outside.

He pushed the pantry door open. The hinges squeaked faintly.

The kitchen was empty. Grady was gone. Everything was still and frozen beneath the cold white glare of the fluorescent bars. His eyes caught on the large chopping block where the three of them had eaten their meals.

Standing on top of it was a martini glass, a fifth of gin, and a plastic dish filled with olives.

Leaning against it was one of the rogue mallets from the equipment shed.

He looked at it for a long time.

Then a voice, much deeper and much more powerful than Grady's, spoke from somewhere, everywhere—*from inside him.*

(Keep your promise, Mr. Torrance.)

"I will," he said. He heard the fawning servility in his own voice but was unable to control it. "I will."

He walked to the chopping block and put his hand on the handle of the mallet.

He hefted it.

Swung it.

It hissed viciously through the air
Jack Torrance began to smile.

49

HALLORANN, GOING UP THE COUNTRY

It was quarter of two in the afternoon and according to the snow-clotted signs and the Hertz Buick's odometer he was less than three miles from Estes Park when he finally went off the road.

In the hills, the snow was falling faster and more furiously than Hallorann had ever seen (which was, perhaps, not to say a great deal, since Hallorann had seen as little snow as he could manage in his lifetime) and the wind was blowing a capricious gale—now from the west, now backing around to the north, sending clouds of powdery snow across his field of vision, making him coluldy aware again and again that if he missed a turn he might well plunge two hundred feet off the road, the Electra cartwheeling as over teapot as it went down. Making it worse was his own amateur status as a winter driver. It scared him to have the yellow center line buried under swirling, drifting snow and it scared him when the heavy gusts of wind came unimpeded through the notches in the hills and actually made the heavy Buick sew around. It scared him that the road information signs were mostly masked with snow and you could flip a coin as to whether the road was going to break right or left up ahead in the white drive-in movie screen he seemed to be driving through. He was scared all right. He had driven in a cold sweat since climbing into the hills west of Boulder and Lyons, handling the accelerator and brake as if they were Ming vases. Between rock n' roll tunes on the radio, the disc jockey constantly advised motorists to stay off the major highways and under no conditions to go into the mountains, be-

cause many roads were impassable and all of them were dangerous. Scores of minor accidents had been reported, and two serious ones - a party of skiers in a VW microbus and a family that had been heading for Albuquerque through the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. The combined score on both was four dead and five wounded. So sorry of those roads and yet into the good music here at KLLN, we jockeys danced cheerily and then compounded the misery by playing Scousers in the Sun. We had joy, we had fun, we had. Terry Jacks gibbered happily and Hal, still strapped, beamed off vicariously, knowing he would have it back on in five minutes. No matter how bad I was, it was better than nothing else, though to a white sadness.

And I was right up his ebber-tide'n back')

[illegible]

The war was again this time from the north coast and the Enns
the first time in power and he was again caught in the
curb stones and even from the embankments or at
the end of the war was being brought back.

[illegible][illegible]

below of the wind, and then the sound of its airhorn, hard, long, almost deafening.

Haborann's testicles turned into two small wrinkled sacs filled with shaver-cream. His guts seemed to have been transformed into a large mass of Silly Putty.

Color was materializing out of the white snow, clouded orange. He could see the high cab, even the gesticulating figure of the driver behind the single long wiper blade. He could see the V-shape of the plow's wing blades, spewing more snow up onto the road's left-hand embankment like pained, smoking exhaust.

WHAAAAAAAAA! the airhorn belated indignantly.

He squeezed the accelerator like the breast of a much-loved woman and the Buick scooted forward and toward the right. There was no embankment over here, the plows headed up on—stead—d down had only to push the snow directly over the drop.

(The drop, ah yes, the drop—)

The wingblades on Haborann's left fully four feet higher than the Electra's roof fluted by with no more than an inch or two to spare. Until the plow had actually cleared him, Haborann had thought a crash inevitable. A prayer which was half an immaculate apology to the boy flitted through his mind like a torn rag.

Then the plow was past, its revolving blue light's glimmering and flashing in Haborann's rearview mirror.

He jockeyed the Buick's steering wheel back to the left, but nothing doing. The scoot had turned into a skid, and the Buick was floating gleefully toward the lip of the drop, spuming snow from under its mudguards.

He flicked the wheel back the other way, and the skid's direction and the car's front and rear began to swap places. Panicked now, he pumped the brake hard, and then fed a hard bump. In front of him the road was gone—he was looking into a bottomless chasm of swirling snow, a vast, greenish-gray, pines far away and far below.

(I'm going to—mother of Jesus I'm going to!)

And that was where the car stopped, coming forward at a thirty-degree angle, the left tender armmed against a curb, the rear wheels nearly off the ground. When Haborann tried reverse, the wheels only spun helplessly. His heart was doing a Gene Krupa drumroll.

He got out—very carefully he got out—and went around to the Buick's back deck.

He was standing there looking at the back wheels helplessly, when a cheerful voice behind him said: "Hello there, is a You're as, be sh't right out of your mind."

He turned around and saw the plow forty yards further down the road, obscured in the blowing snow except for the raftered dark brown streak of its exhaust and the revolving blue lights on top. The driver was standing just behind him dressed in a long sheepskin coat and a sucker over it. A blue-and-white pinstriped engineer's cap was perched on his head, and Hallorann could hardly believe it was staying on in the tee he'd hit the wind.

(Glue. It sure-God must be glue.)

"Hi," he said. "Can you put me back on the road?"

"Oh, I guess I could," the plow driver said. "Who're he'll you doing way up here, mister? Good way to kill your ass."

"Urgent business."

"Nothin' is that urgent," the plow driver said slowly and kindly, as if speaking to a mental defective. "If you don't hit that post a little mite harder, nobody woulda got you out till All Fool's Day. Don't come from these parts, do you?"

No. And I wouldn't be here unless my business was as urgent as I say."

That so? The driver shifted his stance companionably as if they were having a desultory chat on the back steps instead of standing in a blizzard halfway between foot and hoof, with Hallorann's car balanced three hundred feet above the tops of the trees below.

"Where you headed? Estes?"

"No, a place called the Overlook Hotel," Hallorann said. "It's a little way above Sidewinder—"

But the driver was shaking his head already.

"I guess I know well enough where that is," he said. "After, you'd never get up to the old Overlook Roads between Estes Park and Snowmass is bloody damn hot. It's damn hot right behind us no matter how hard we push. I come through it a few miles back that was damn near six feet through the middle. And even if you could make Sidewinder, why the road's closed."

from there all the way across to Buckland, Utah. Nope." He shook his head. "Never make it, mister. Never make it at all."

"I have to try," Halorann said, calling on his last reserves of patience to keep his voice normal. "There's a boy up there—"

Boy? Naw. The Overlook closes down at the last end of September. Not percentage keep it open longer. Too many sho storms like this."

He's the son of the caretaker. He's in trouble."

How would you know that?"

His patience snapped.

For Christ's sake are you going to sit and there and flap y' aw at me the rest of the day? *I know, I know.* Now are you going to plow me back on the road or not?"

"Kind of rusty aren't you?" the driver observed, not particularly perturbed. "Sure get back in there. I got a chain behind the seat."

Halorann got back behind the wheel, beginning to shake with delayed reaction now. His hands were numb, almost clear through. He had forgotten to bring gloves.

The plow backed up to the rear of the Buick, and he saw the driver get out with a long coil of chain. Halorann opened the door and shouted, "What can I do to help?"

"Stay out of the way, is all," the driver shouted back. "This ain't gonna take a bunk."

Which was true. A shudder ran through the Buick's frame as the chain snapped tight, and a second later it was back on the road, pointed more or less toward Estes Park. The plow driver walked up beside the window and knocked on the safety glass. Halorann rolled down the window.

"Thanks," he said. "I'm sorry I shouted at you."

"I been shouted at before," the driver said with a grin. "I guess you're sorta sitting up. You take these. A pair of bulky blue mittens are speckled Halorann's up. You'll need 'em when you get off the road again, I guess. Cold as hell. You wear 'em unless you want to spend the rest of your life back your nose with a crocheted hook. And you send 'em back. My wife knitted 'em and I'm gonna use 'em. Name and address is saved right in the box, you know. I want 'em. By the way, You do send 'em back with you."

don't need em anymore. And I don't want to have to go pay a postage due, mind."

"All right," Halorann said. "Thanks. One here if a lot."

"You be careful. I'd take you myself, but I'm busy as a cat in a mess of guitar strings."

"That's okay. Thanks again."

He started toward the window, but Cottrill stopped him.

"When you get to Sackwinder, if you get to Sackwinder, you go to Durkin's Concessions right next to the library. Can't miss it. You ask for Larry Durkin. Tell him Howie Cottrill sent you and you want to rent one of his snowmobiles. You mention my name and show those mittens, you'll get the cut rate."

"Thanks again," Halorann said.

Cottrill nodded. "It's funny. A lot no way you could know someone's in trouble up here at the Overlook. The phone's out, sure as hell. But I believe you. Sometimes I get fed up."

Halorann nodded. "Sometimes I do, too."

"Yeah. I know you do. But you take care."

"I will."

Cottrill disappeared into the blowing darkness with a final wave. His engineer cap still mounted perkily on his head. Halorann got going again, the chains flapping at the snowcover on the road, finally digging in enough to start the Buick moving. Behind him, Howard Cottrill gave a final good-buck burst on his plow's air horn, although it was really unnecessary. Halorann could feel him wishing him good luck.

That's two shaves in one day, he thought, and I thought to be some kind of good omen. But he dismissed the idea, glad he had. And meaning two people with the shave in one day, when he usually didn't run across more than four or five in the course of a year, might not mean anything. That feeling of finality, a feeling *(like things are all wrapped up)*.

He could not completely define what was very much with him. It was.

The Buick wanted to skid a few ways around a tight curve and Halorann succeeded in carefully harrying it to break. He aimed to be rid of it and it was. And it was. And Archie was just the lead mare's Harry Buck with a raw day.

Archie galloped, which struck the cow, making a noise and a splash. Halorann cursed it and hurried on, so close, even he

wheel Aretha finished her song and then the jock was on again, telling him that driving today was a good way to get killed.

Halorann snapped the radio off.

* * *

He did make it to Sidewinder, although he was flat and a half hours on the road between Estes Park and there. By the time he got to the Upland Highway it was full dark, but the snowstorm showed no sign of abating. Twice he'd had to stop in front of drifts that were as high as his car's hood and wait for the plows to come along and knock holes in them. At one of the drifts the plow had come up on his side of the road and there had been another close call. The driver had merely swung around his car, not getting out to chew the fat, but he did deliver one of the two finger gestures that all Americans above the age of ten recognize, and it was not the peace sign.

It seemed that as he drew closer to the Overlook his need to hurry became more and more compulsive. He was a hiker, fumbling at his wristwatch almost constantly. The hiker seemed to be flying along.

Ten minutes after he had turned onto the Upland, he passed two signs. The whoopie sign had a carved birth of hiker's jaw pack so he was able to read them. SIDEWINDER. The first said. The second: ROAD CLOSED 12 MILES AHEAD. LOOKING WEST 8 MONTHS.

"Larry Duckin. Halorann muttered to himself. His back felt was strained and tense in the faded green glow of the snowstorm's ruinous. I was, he thought, six. The Colorado was so damn Larry—"

And that was when it struck him. He felt the same old changes as the night once, heavy, cold, and full of snow.

**(GET OUT OF HERE YOU DIRTY MUCKY LIES
NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS YOU MUCKY LIES
AROUND TRY AND FIND OUT ALL ABOUT
YOU LE FROM A TRILL LIES YOU MUCKY LIES
LIES LIES AND THEN BURN ME
WHAT WE DO WITH MUCKY LIES
AROUND RIGHT NOW)**

He had just started to sing when he saw a car coming from the south and no words left him. He was but a series of throaty notes.

ages that were slammed into his head with terrific force. He took his hands from the steering wheel to blot the pictures out.

Then the car smashed broadside into one of the embankments, rebounded, slewed halfway around, and came to a stop. The rear wheels spun uselessly.

Halorann snapped the gearshift into park, and then covered his face with his hands. He did not precisely cry, what escaped him was an uneven huh-huh-huh sound. His chest heaved. He knew that if that blast had taken him on a stretch of road with a drop-off on one side or the other, he might well be dead now. Maybe that had been the idea. And it might hit him again, at any time. He would have to protect against it. He was surrounded by a red force of immense power that might have been memory. He was drowning in instinct.

He took his hands away from his face and opened his eyes cautiously. Nothing. If there was something trying to scare him again, it wasn't getting through. He was closed off.

Had that happened to the boy? Dear God, had that happened to the little boy?

And of all the images, the one that bothered him the most was that dull whacking sound, like a hammer splatting into thick cheese. What did that mean?

(Jesus, not that little boy Jesus, please)

He dropped the gearshift lever into low range and fed the engine gas a little at a time. The wheels spun, caught, spun, and caught again. The Buick began to move, its headlights cutting weakly through the swirling snow. He looked at his watch. Almost six-thirty now. And he was beginning to feel that was very late indeed.

50

REDRUM

Wendy Torrance stood indecisive in the middle of the bedroom, looking at her son who had fallen fast asleep.

Half an hour ago the sounds had ceased. All of them all at a

once. The elevator, the party, the sound of room doors opening and closing. Instead of taking her mind to make the tension had had been building in her even worse. It was like a magic hush before the storm's final brutal push. But Danny had dozed off a moment at once, first into a light twitching doze, and in the next ten minutes or so a heavier sleep. Even looking directly at him she could barely see the slow rise and fall of his narrow chest.

She wondered when he had last gotten a full night's sleep, one without tormenting dreams or long periods of dark wakefulness, tracing to reels that had only scanty audible and visible—to her in the last couple of days—as the Overlook's grip on the three of them tightened.

(Real psychic phenomena or group hypnosis?)

She didn't know, and didn't think it mattered. What had been happening was just as deadly either way. She looked at Danny and thought

(God grant he lie still)

that if he was undisturbed, he might sleep the rest of the night through. Whatever talent he had, he was still a small boy and he needed his rest.

It was Jack she had begun to worry about.

She grimaced with sudden pain, took her hand away from her mouth, and saw she had torn off one of her fingernails. And her nails were one thing she'd always tried to keep nice. They weren't long enough to be called hooks, but suitably shaped and

(and what are you worrying about your fingernails for?)

She laughed a little, but it was a shaky sound without amusement.

First Jack had stopped howling and battering at the door. Then the party had begun again.

(or did it ever stop? did it some times just drift into a slightly different angle of time where they weren't meant to hear it?)

counterpointed by the crashing, banging elevator. Then that had stopped. In that new silence, as Danny had been falling asleep, she had fancied she heard low conspiratorial voices coming from the kitchen almost directly below them. At first she had dismissed it as the wind, which could mimic many different human vocal ranges, from a papery deathbed whisper around the doors and window frames to a full-out scream around the eaves—the sound of a woman fleeing a murderer in a cheap melodrama. Yet,

standing stiffly beside Danny, the idea that it was indeed voices became more and more convincing.

Jack and someone else, discussing his escape from the pantry.

Discussing the murder of his wife and son.

I would be nothing new inside these walls, murder had been done here before.

She had gone to the leading vent and had placed her ear against

but at the exact moment the furnace had come on, and any sound was lost in the rush of warm air coming up from the basement. When the furnace had kicked off again, five minutes ago, the place was completely silent except for the wind, the gritty spatter of snow against the building, and the occasional groan of a board.

She looked down at her ripped fingernail. Small beads of blood were oozing up from beneath it.

(Jack's gotten out.)

(Don't talk nonsense.)

(Yes, he's on. He's got ten a knife from the kitchen or maybe the meat cleaver. He's on his way up here right now, walking along the sides of the stairs so the stairs won't creak.)

(You're insane!)

Her lips were trembling, and for a moment it seemed that she must have cried the words out loud. But the silence held.

She felt watched.

She whirled around and stared at the night-blackened window and a hideous white face with circles of darkness for eyes was gibbering in at her, the face of a monstrous lunatic that had been hiding in these groaning walls all along—

It was only a pattern of frost on the outside of the glass.

She let her breath out in a long, susurraling whisper of fear, and it seemed to her that she heard, quite clearly this time, amused waters from somewhere.

(You're porping at shadows. It's bad enough without that. By tomorrow morning, you'll be ready for the rubber room.)

There was only one way to slay those fears and she knew what it was.

She would have to go down and make sure Jack was still in the pantry.

Very simple. Go downstairs. Have a peek. Come back up. Oh,

by the way stop and grab the tray on the registration counter. The object would be a washout, but the soap could be reheated on the hot plate by Jack's typewriter.

(On yes and don't get killed if he's down here with a knife.)

She walked to the dresser, trying to shake off the man in her doorway on her. Scattered across the dresser's top was a pile of change, a stack of gasoline clats for the hole truck, and two pipes Jack brought with him everywhere but rarely smoked. . . . and his keyring.

She picked it up, felt it in her hand for a moment, and then put it back down. The idea of locking the bedroom door behind her had occurred, but it just didn't appeal. Danny was asleep. Vague thoughts of fire passed through her mind, and something else nibbled more strongly, but she let it go.

Wendy crossed the room, stood indecisively by the door for a moment, then took the knife from the pocket of her robe and curved her right hand around the wooden baft.

She pulled the door open.

The short corridor leading to their quarters was bare. The electric wall sconces all shone brightly at their regular intervals, showing off the reds, blue backgrounds, and sinuous weaving pattern.

(See? No boogies here.)

(No, of course not. They want you out. They want you to do something sexy and womanish, and that is exactly what you are doing.)

She hesitated again, miserably enough, not wanting to leave Danny and the safety of the apartment and at the same time needing badly to reassure herself that Jack was safe. . . . safely packed away.

(Of course he is.)

(But the voices.)

(There were no voices. It was your imagination. I was the wind.)

"It wasn't the wind."

The sound of her own voice made her jump. But the deadly certainty in it made her go forward. The knife swinging by her side catching angles of light and throwing them on the silk wallpaper. Her slippers whistled against the carpet's nap. Her nerves were singing like wires.

She reached the corner of the main corridor and peered around, her mind stiffened for whatever she might see there.

There was nothing to see.

After a moment's hesitation she rounded the corner and began down the main corridor. Each step toward the shadowy stairwell increased her dread and made her aware that she was leaving her sleeping son behind, alone and unprotected. The sound of her slippers against the carpet seemed louder and louder in her ears, twice she looked back over her shoulder to convince herself that someone wasn't creeping up behind her.

She reached the stairwell and put her hand on the cold newel post at the top of the railing. There were nine evenly wide steps down to the lobby. She had counted them enough times to know. Nineteen carpeted stair risers, and nary a Jack crouching on any one of them. Of course not. Jack was locked in the pantry behind a hefty steel box and a thick wooden door.

But the lobby was dark and oh so full of shadows.

Her pulse thudded steadily and deeply in her throat.

Ahead and slightly to the left, the brass yaw of the elevator stood mockingly open, inviting her to step in and take the rest of her life.

(No thank you)

The inside of the car had been draped with pink and white crepe streamers. Confetti had burst from two tabac party favors. Lying in the rear left corner was an empty bottle of champagne.

She sensed movement above her and wheeled to look up the nineteen steps leading to the dark second-floor landing and saw nothing, yet there was a disturbing corner of her-eye-sense on that things.

(things)

had leaped back into the deeper darkness of the hallway up there just before her eyes could register them.

She looked down the stairs again.

Her right hand was sweating against the wooden handle of the knife she switched it to her left, wiped her right palm against the pink terrycloth of her robe and switched the knife back. Almost unaware that her mind had given her body the command to go forward, she began down the stairs, left foot, then right, left foot, then right, her free hand trailing lightly on the banister.

*(Where's the party? Don't let me scare you away, you bunch of
mousy sheeps! Not one scared woman with a knife! Let's have a
little music around here! Let's heave a little life.)*

Ten steps down, a dozen, a baker's dozen.

The light from the first-floor hall filtered a dusky yellow down here, and she remembered that she would have to turn on the lobby lights either beside the entrance to the dining room or inside the manager's office.

Yet there was light coming from somewhere else, wide and muted.

The fluorescents, of course. In the kitchen.

She paused on the thirteenth step, trying to remember if she had turned them off or left them on when she and Danny left. She simply couldn't remember.

Below her, in the lobby, high-backed chairs hulked in pools of shadow. The glass in the lobby doors was pressed white with a uniform blanket of drifted snow. Brass studs in the sofa cushions gleamed faintly like cat's eyes. There were a hundred places to hide.

Her legs stiffed with fear, she crouched down.

Now seventeen, now eighteen, now nineteen.

(Lobby level, madam. Step out carefully.)

The ballroom doors were thrown wide, only darkness spilling out. From within came a steady ticking, like a bomb. She stiffened, then remembered the clock on the mantel, the clock under glass. Jack or Danny must have wound it . . . or maybe it had wound itself up, like everything else in the Overlook.

She turned toward the reception desk, meaning to go through the gate and the manager's office and into the kitchen. Glimping dusky silver, she could see the intended lunch tray.

Then the clock began to strike, little tinkling notes.

Wendy stiffened, her tongue rising to the roof of her mouth. Then she relaxed. It was striking eight, that was all. Eight o'clock.

. . . five, six, seven . . .

She counted the strokes. It suddenly seemed wrong to move again until the clock had stopped.

. . . eight . . . nine . . .

(?? Nine ??)

. . . ten . . . eleven . . .

Suddenly he steeled it came to her. She turned back clumsily for the stairs, knowing already she was too late. But how could she have known?

Twelve.

All the lights in the bathroom went on. There was a huge, striking flourish of brass. Wendy screamed aloud, the sound of her cry insignificant against the blare issuing from those brazen lungs.

"Unmask!" the cry echoed. "Unmask! Unmask!"

Then they faded, as if down a long corridor of time, leaving her alone again.

No, not alone.

Soe turned and he was coming for her.

It was Jack and yet not Jack. His eyes were set with a vacant murderous glow, his familiar mouth now wore a quivering, joyless grin.

He had the roque mallet in one hand.

"Thought you'd sock me in? Is that what you thought you'd do?"

The mallet whistled through the air. Soe stepped backward, tripped over a hassock, fell on the lobby rug.

"Jack—"

"You back," he whispered. "I know what you are."

The mallet came down again with whistling, deadly velocity and buried itself in her soft stomach. She screamed, suddenly submerged in an ocean of pain. Dimly she saw the mallet rebound. It came to her with sudden numbing reality that he meant to beat her to death with the mallet he held in his hands.

She tried to cry out to him again, to beg him to stop for Danny's sake, but her breath had been knocked loose. She could only force out a weak whisper, hardly a sound at all.

"Now. Now, by Christ," he said, grinning. He kicked the hassock out of his way. "I guess you'll take your medicine now."

The mallet whickered down. Wendy rolled to her left, her robe tangling above her knees. Jack's hand on the mallet was jarred loose when it hit the floor. He had to stoop and pick it up, and while he did she ran for the stairs, the breath at last sobbing back into her. Her stomach was a bruise of throbbing pain.

"Bitch," he said through his grin and began to come at her. "You sinking bitch! I guess you'll get what's coming to you. I guess you will."

She heard the mallet whistle through the air, and then agony exploded on her right side as the mallet-head took her as deep as the end of her breasts breaking wounds. She fell forward on her knees and new agony ripped her as she struck on the wounded side. Instinct made her roll over, roll away and to make a zigzag path the side of her face missing by a naked inch. The mallet struck the edge of the stair carpeting with a muffled thud. That was when she saw the knife, which had been yanked out of her hand by her assailant, lying glimmering on the fourth stair riser.

"Bitch," he repeated. The mallet came down. She shoved herself upward and it landed just below her kneecap. Her weapon was suddenly on fire. Blood began to trickle down her calf. And then the mallet was coming down again. She threw her head away from it and it smashed into the stair riser in the hollow between her neck and shoulder, scraping away the flesh from her ear.

He brought the mallet down again and this time she rolled to the wall with him, down the stairs, a side the arc of his swing. A shock escaped her as her broken ribs thumped and groaned. She struck the stairs with her body while he was off balance and he fell backward with a yell of anger and surprise his feet digging to keep their purchase on the stair riser. Then he thumped to the floor as the mallet flew from his hand. He sat up staring at her for a moment with shocked eyes.

"I'll kill you for that," he said.

He rolled over and stretched out for the handle on the floor. Wendy forced herself to her feet. Her left leg sent her after him out of pain all the way up to her hip. Her face was ashy pale but set. She copped on to his back as his hand closed over the shaft of the roque mallet.

"Oh dear God!" she screamed to the Overlook's shadowy lobby and buried the sixteen knife in his lower back up to the handle.

He's flinched beneath her and then shrieked. She thought she had never heard such a awful sound in her whole life. It was as if the very boards and windows and doors of the hotel had screamed. It seemed to go on and on while he remained motion-

slid beneath her weight. They were like a parlor charade of horse and rider. Except that the back of his red-and-black-checked flannel shirt was growing darker, sadden, with spreading blood.

Then he collapsed forward on his face, bucking her off on her hurt side, making her groan.

She lay breathing harshly for a time, unable to move. She was an excruciating throb of pain from one end to the other. Every time she inhaled, something stabbed viciously at her, and her neck was wet with blood from her grazed ear.

There was only the sound of her struggle to breathe, the wind, and the ticking clock in the ballroom.

At last she forced herself to her feet and hobbled across to the stairway. When she got there she clung to the newel post, head down, waves of faintness washing over her. When it had passed a little, she began to climb, using her unhurt leg and pulling with her arms on the banister. Once she looked up, expecting to see Danny there, but the stairway was empty.

(Thank God he slept through it thank God thank God)

Six steps up she had to rest, her head down, her blond hair coiled on and over the banister. Air whistled painfully through her throat, as if it had grown barbs. Her right side was a swollen, hot mass.

(Come on Wendy come on old girl get a locked door behind you and then look at the damage thirteen more to go not so bad. And when you get to the upstairs corridor you can crawl. I give my permission.)

She drew in as much breath as her broken ribs would allow and half-pulled, half-fell up another riser. And another.

She was on the ninth, almost halfway up, when Jack's voice came from behind and below her. He said thickly "You bitch. You killed me."

Terror as black as midnight swept through her. She looked over her shoulder and saw Jack getting slowly to his feet.

His back was bowed over, and she could see the handle of the kitchen knife sticking out of it. His eyes seemed to have contracted, almost to have lost themselves in the pale, sagging folds of the skin around them. He was grasping the roque mallet loosely in his left hand. The end of it was bloody. A scrap of her pink terry-cloth robe stuck almost in the center.

"I'll give you your medicine," he whispered, and began to stagger toward the stairs.

Whimpering with fear, she began to pull herself upward again. Ten steps, a dozen, a baker's dozen. But still the first-floor hallway looked as far above her as an unattainable mountain peak. She was panting now, her side shrieking in protest. Her hair swung wildly back and forth in front of her face. Sweat stung her eyes. The ticking of the domed clock in the bedroom seemed to fill her ears, and counterpointing it, Jack's panting, agonized gasps as he began to mount the stairs.

51

HALLORANN ARRIVES

Larry Durkin was a tall and skinny man with a morose face overtopped with a luxuriant mane of red hair. Hallorann had caught him just as he was leaving the Conoco station, the morose face buried deeply inside an army-issue parka. He was reluctant to do any more business that stormy day no matter how far Hallorann had come, and even more reluctant to rent one of his two snowmobiles out to this wild-eyed black man who insisted on going up to the old Overlook. Among people who had spent most of their lives in the little town of Sidewinder, the hotel had a smelly reputation. Murder had been done up there. A bunch of hoods had run the place for a while, and cutthroat businessmen had run it for a while, too. And things had been done up at the old Overlook that never made the papers, because money has a way of talking. But the people in Sidewinder had a pretty good idea. Most of the hotel's chambermaids came from here, and chambermaids see a lot.

But when Hallorann mentioned Howard Cottrell's name and showed Durkin the tag inside one of the blue mittens, the gas station owner thawed.

"Sent you here, did he?" Durkin asked, unlocking one of the garage bays and leading Hallorann inside. "Good to know the old rip's got some sense left. I thought he was plumb out of it." He

flicked a switch and a bank of very old and very dirty fluorescent buzzed wearily and life. "Now what in the tarnation would you want up at that place, fella?"

Halorann's nerve had begun to crack. The last few miles into Sidewinder had been very bad. Once a gust of wind that must have been tooting along at better than sixty miles an hour had floored the Buck all the way around in a 360° turn. And there were still miles to travel with God alone know what at the other end of them. He was terrified for the boy. Now it was almost ten minutes to seven and he had this whole song and dance to go through again.

"Somebody is in trouble up there," he said very carefully. "The son of the caretaker."

"Who? Torrance's boy? Now what kind of trouble could he be in?"

"I don't know." Halorann muttered. He felt sick with the time this was taking. He was speaking with a country man, and he knew that all country men feel a similar need to approach their business obliquely, to smell around its corners and sides before plunging into the middle of dealing. But there was no time, because now he was one scared nigger and if this went on much longer he just might decide to cut and run.

"Look," he said. "Please. I need to go up there and I have to have a snowmobile to go there. I'd pay your price, but for God's sake, come get on with my business."

"All right," Durkin said, unperturbed. "If Howard sent you, that's good enough. You take this ArcticCat. I'll put five gallons of gas in the can. Tanks full. She'll get you up and back down, I guess."

"Thank you," Halorann said, not quite steadily.

"I'll take twenty dollars. That's all he owes me."

Halorann fumbled a twenty out of his wallet and handed it over. Durkin tacked it into one of his shirt pockets with hardly a look.

"Guess maybe we better trade jackets, too," Durkin said, pulling off his parka. "The overcoat of yours will gonna be worth more'n nothing. You trade me back when you're in the snow-sled."

"Oh, hey, I couldn't—"

"Don't fuss with me," Durkin interrupted, still mildly. "I ain't sending you out to freeze. I only got to walk down two blocks and I'm at my own supper table. Give it over."

Slightly dazed, Halorann traded his overcoat for Durkin's fur-lined parka. Overhead the fluorescents buzzed faintly, reminding him of the lights in the Overlook's kitchen.

"Torrance's boy," Durkin said and shook his head. "Good-lookin' little tyke, ain't he? He n his dad was in here a lot before the snow really flew. Drivin' the hotel truck, mostly. Looked to me like the two of em was just about as tight as they could get. That's one little boy that loves his daddy. Hope he's all right."

"So do I." Halorann zipped the parka and tied the hood.

"Lemme help you push that out," Durkin said. They rolled the snowmobile across the oil-stained concrete and toward the garage bay. "You ever drove one of these before?"

"No."

"Well, there's nothing to it. The instructions are pasted there on the dashboard, but all here really is, is stop and go. Your throttle's here, just like a motorcycle throttle. Brake on the other side. Lean with it on the turns. This baby will do seventy on hardpack, but on this powder you'll get no more than fifty and that's pushing it."

Now they were in the service station's snow-filled front lot, and Durkin had raised his voice to make himself heard over the battering of the wind. "Stay on the road!" he shouted at Halorann's ear. "Keep your eye on the guardrail posts and the signs and you'll be all right, I guess. If you get off the road, you're going to be dead. Understand?"

Halorann nodded.

"Wait a minute," Durkin told him, and ran back into the garage bay.

While he was gone, Halorann turned the key in the ignition and pumped the throttle a little. The snowmobile coughed into brush-choppy life.

Durkin came back with a red and black ski mask.

"Put this on under your hood," he shouted.

Halorann dragged it on. It was a tight fit, but it cut the last of the numbing wind off from his cheeks and forehead and chin.

Durkin leaned close to make himself heard.

"I guess you must know about things the same way Howie does some times," he said. "It don't matter except that place has got a bad reputation around here. I'll give you a ride if you want it."

"I don't think it would do any good," Halloran shouted back.

"You are the boss. But if you get that boy, you bring him to Sixteen Peach Lane. The wife'll have some scrap on."

"Okay. Thanks for everything."

"You watch out!" Dark vowed. "Stay on the road!"

Halloran nodded and twisted the throttle slowly. The snowmobile purred forward, the headlamp cutting a clean cone of light through the thickly falling snow. He saw Dark's unpraised hand in the rearview mirror and raised his own in return. Then he nudged the handlebars to the left and was traveling up Main Street, the snowmobile coursing smoothly through the white light thrown by the streetlamps. The speedometer stood at thirty miles an hour. It was ten past seven. At the Overlook Wendy and Danny were sleeping and Jack Terrace was discussing matters of life and death with the previous caretaker.

Five blocks up Main, the streetlamps ended. For half a mile there were small houses, all buttoned tightly up against the storm, and then only wind-howling darkness. In the black again with no light but the thin spear of the snowmobile's headlamp, he lurched forward a moment, a chicken-like fear, dismal and dished, falling. He had never felt so alone. For several minutes, as the few lights of Sidewinder dwindled away and disappeared in the rear view, the urge to turn around and go back was a most insistent one. He called on that for a moment. Dark's answer for Jack Terrace's boy, he had, of course, was another snowmobile and come with him.

(That probably got him to go to it and here.)

(Clenching his teeth, he turned the throttle higher and watched the needle on the speedometer climb past forty and some a little more. He seemed to be going but he was, and yet he was at a standstill. A fast engine, a fast vehicle, with a fast driver, a fast man, he had to get to the Overlook. But at a higher speed he might not get there at all.)

He kept his eyes glued to the passing guardrails and the dimmed streetlights shimmered in and out of sight. Many of them were broken and red snow where he saw curves so dangerously laid out for the snowmobile racing up the cliffs that masked the unquiet

before turning back onto where the road was in the summertime. The odometer counted off the miles at a maddeningly slow clip—five, ten, fifteen. Even behind the knitted ski mask his face was beginning to stiffen up and his legs were growing numb.

(Guess I'd give a hundred bucks for a pair of ski pants.)

As each mile turned over, his terror grew—as if the place had a prison atmosphere that thickened as you neared it. Had it ever been like this before? He had never really liked the Overlook, and there had been others who shared his feeling, but it had never been like this.

He could feel the voice that had almost wrecked him outside of a Jewinder still trying to get in, to get past his defenses to the soft meat inside. If it had been strong twenty-five miles back, how much stronger would it be now? He couldn't keep it out entirely. Some of it was seeping through, flooding his brain with sinister subliminal images. More and more he got the image of a bad and hurt woman in a bathroom, holding her hands up uselessly to ward off a blow—and he felt more and more that the woman must be—

(Jesus, watch out!)

The embarkment was coming up ahead of him like a freight train. Wool-gathering, he had missed a turn sign. He cranked the snowmobile's steering gear hard right, and it swung around, falling as it did so. From underneath came the harsh grating sound of the snowtread on rock. He thought the snowmobile was going to dump him, and it did totter on the knife-edge of balance before half-dragging, half-slodding back down to the more or less level surface of the snow-buried road. Then the dropoff was ahead of him, the headlamp showing an abrupt end to the snowcover and darkness beyond that. He turned the snowmobile the other way, a pulse beating sickly in his throat.

(Keep it on the road, Dicky old chum.)

He forced himself to turn the throttle up another notch. Now the speedometer needle was pegged just below fifty. The wind howled and roared. The headlamp probed the dark.

An unknown length of time later, he came around a drift-banked curve and saw a glimmering flash of light ahead. Just a glimpse, and then it was blotted out by a rising field of land. The glimpse was so brief he was persuading himself it had been wishful thinking when another turn brought it in view again, slightly closer, for another few seconds. There was no question of its rea-

by this time, he had seen it from just this angle too many times before. It was the Overlook. There were lights on the first floor and lobby levels, it looked like

Some of his error—no part had had to do with driving off the road or wrecking the snowmobile on an unseen curve—came eddying away. The snowmobile swept surely into the first half of an S curve, but he now remembered correctly for, for long, and that was when he heard and picked out the

(oh dear Jesus god what is it)

on the road ahead of him. Lined in stark blacks and whites, Halorann first thought it was some hideously huge timberwolf that had been driven down from the high country by the storm. Then as he closed on it, he recognized it and horror closed his throat.

Not a wolf but a lion. A hedge lion

Its features were a mask of black shadow and powdered snow, its haunches wound tight to spring. And it did spring, snow heaving around its pouncing rear legs in a solid burst of crystal glitter.

Halorann screamed and twisted the handlebars hard right, ducking low as the same time. Scratching, moping pain scrawled itself across his face, his neck, his shoulders. The ski mask was torn open down the back. He was hurled from the snow nose. He hit the snow, plowed through it, rolled over.

He could feel it coming for him. Only his vision there was a sinister snell of green leaves and heavy. A huge hedge paw had come in the smud of the back as the flow ten feet through the air sprayed out like a fog dog. He saw the snowmobile, riderless, snake the embankment and rear up, its headlamp searching the sky. It fell over with a bump and stalled.

Then the hedge lion was on him. There was a crackling, rasping sound, something raked across the front of the parka, shredding it. It might have been stiff twig, but Halorann knew it was claws.

"You're not here!" Halorann screamed at the cackling, snarling hedge lion. "You're not there dead!" He dragged it, his legs and arms, that way to the snowmobile before he got tangled, hauling it across the road with a sickle pull. Now Halorann saw a faint, exploding lights.

No, there, he said again, but it was a fading light. His knees

unlunged and dropped him into the snow. He crawled for the snowmobile, the right side of his face a scarf of blood. The lion struck him again, rolling him onto his back like a turtle. It roared playfully.

Haworann struggled to reach the snowmobile. What he needed was there. And then the lion was on him again, ripping and clawing.

52

WENDY AND JACK

Wendy risked another glance over her shoulder. Jack was on the sixth riser, clinging to the banister much as she was doing herself. He was still grinning, and dark blood oozed slowly through the grin and sapped down the line of his jaw. He bared his teeth at her.

"I'm going to bash your brains in. Bash them right to fuck in." He struggled up another riser.

Panic spurred her, and the ache in her side diminished a little. She pulled herself up as fast as she could regardless of the pain, yanking convulsively at the banister. She reached the top and threw a glance behind her.

He seemed to be gaining strength rather than losing it. He was only four risers from the top, measuring the distance with the roque mallet in his left hand as he pulled himself up with his right.

"Right behind you," he panted through his bloody grin, as if reading her mind. "Right behind you now, bitch. With your medicine."

She fled stumbingly down the main corridor, hands pressed to her side.

The door to one of the rooms jerked open and a man with a green ghoul mask on popped out. "*Great party isn't it?*" He screamed in her face, and pulled the waxed string of a party favor. There was an echoing bang and suddenly crepe streamers were drifting all around her. The man in the ghoul mask cackled.

and slammed back into his room. She fell forward onto the carpet, full-length. Her right side seemed to explode with pain, and she fought off the blackness of unconsciousness desperately. Dimly she could hear the elevator running again, and beneath her splayed fingers she could see that the carpet pattern appeared to move swaying and twisting sinuously.

The mallet slammed down behind her and she threw herself forward, sobbing. Over her shoulder she saw Jack stumble forward, overbalance, and bring the mallet down just before he crashed to the carpet, expelling a bright splash of blood onto the nap.

The mallet head struck her squarely between the shoulder blades and for a moment the agony was so great that she could only writhe, hands opening and clenching. Something inside her had snapped—she had heard it clearly—and for a few moments she was aware only in a mired, muffled way, as if she were merely observing these things through a cloudy wrapping of gauze.

Then full consciousness came back, terror and pain with it.

Jack was trying to get up so he could finish the job.

Weedy tried to stand and found it was impossible. Electric bolts seemed to course up and down her back at the effort. She began to crawl, moving in a sideshake motion. Jack was crawling after her, using the rogue mallet as a crutch or a cane.

She reached the corner and pulled herself around it, using her hands to walk at the angle of the wall. Her terror deepened: she would not have believed that possible, but it was. It was a harrowing, indescribably worse, not to be able to see him or know how close he was getting. She tore out hithers of the carpet napping pulling herself along, and she was halfway down this short hall before she noticed the bathroom door was standing wide open.

(Danny! O Jesus)

She flung herself on her knees and then crawled her way to her feet, hands scraping over the thick wax paper. Her hands pulled like jaws of stone. She ignored the pain and half-waked, half-stumbled through the doorway as Jack came around the far corner and began to clear his way down the hall with the open door, leaning on the rogue mallet.

She caught the edge of the door, set her hands against it, and grabbed the doorframe.

Jack shouted at her. "Don't you shut that door? God damn you, don't you dare shut it!"

She slammed it closed and shot the bolt. Her left hand pawed wildly at the junk on the dresser knocking loose combs onto the floor where they rolled in every direction. Her hand seized the key ring just as the mallet whined down against the door, making it tremble in its frame. She got the key into the lock on the second stab and twisted it to the right. At the sound of the tumbler falling, Jack screamed. The mallet came down against the door in a volley of booming blows that made her flinch and step back. How could he be doing that with a knife in his back? Where was he finding the strength? She wanted to shriek *Why aren't you dead?* at the locked door.

Instead she turned around. She and Danny would have to go into the attached bathroom and lock that door, too, in case Jack actually could break through the bedroom door. The thought of escaping down the dumb-waiter shaft crossed her mind in a wild burst, and then she rejected it. Danny was small enough to fit into it, but she would be unable to control the rope pulley. He might go crashing at the way to the bottom.

The bathroom it would have to be. And if Jack broke through into there—

But she wouldn't allow herself to think of it.

"Danny, honey, you'll have to wake up now—"

But the bed was empty.

When he had begun to sleep more soundly she had thrown the blankets and one of the quilts over him. Now they were thrown back.

"I'll get you!" Jack howled. "I'll get both of you!" Every other word was punctuated with a blow from the rogue hammer, yet Wendy ignored both. All of her attention was focused on that empty bed.

"Come out here! Unlock this goddam door!"

"Danny?" she whispered.

Of course. When Jack had attacked her. It had come through to him, as violent emotions always seemed to. Perhaps he'd even seen the whole thing in a nightmare. He was hiding.

She fell clumsily to her knees, enduring another bolt of pain from her swollen and bleeding leg, and looked under the bed. Nothing there but dustballs and Jack's bedroom slippers.

Jack screamed her name, and this time when he swung the mallet, a long splinter of wood jumped from the door and clattered

off the barrow on parking. The next blow brought a sickening, splintering crack—the sound of dry kindling under a hatchet. The hooded man's head now splintered and gouged at its own right, bashed through it, now he crouched in the door, with withdrawn arms, came low to the ground, sending wounded shrapnel flying across the room.

Wendy pulled herself together feet again using the foot of the bed and hobbled across the room to the closet. Her broken ribs stabbed at her, making her groan.

"Danny?"

She crushed the hanging garments aside frantically, some of them slipped the hangers and balanced gracefully to the floor. He was not in the closet.

She hobbled toward the bathroom and as she reached the door she glanced back over her shoulder. The matter crashed through again, widening the hole, and then a hand appeared, groping for the bolt. She saw with horror that she had left Jack's keyring dangling from the lock.

The hand yanked the bolt back and as it did so it struck the bunched keys. They pinged merrily. The hand reached men victoriously.

With a sob, she pushed her way into the bathroom and slammed the door just as the bedroom door burst open and Jack charged through, bellowing.

Wendy ran the bolt and twisted the spring lock, looking around desperately. The bathroom was empty. Danny wasn't here, either. And as she caught sight of her own hood-streaked, horrified face in the medicine cabinet mirror, she was glad. She had never believed the children should be witness to the little quartets of their parents. And perhaps the lung that was now raving through the bedroom, overturning things and smashing them, would finally collapse before it could go after her son. Perhaps, she thought, it might be possible for her to inflict even more damage on it—kill it, perhaps.

Her eyes skated quickly over the bathroom's machine-produced porcelain surfaces, looking for anything that might serve as a weapon. There was a bar of soap—but even wrapped in a towel she didn't think it would be lethal enough. Everything else was bolted down. God, was there nothing she could do?

Beyond the door the animal sounds of destruction went on and on, accompanied by thick shouts that they would "take their medicine" and "pay for what they'd done to him." He would "show them who's boss." They were "worthless puppies," the both of them.

There was a thump as her record player was overturned, a horrible crash as the secondhand TV's picture tube was smashed, the tinkle of windowglass followed by a cold draft under the bathroom door. A dull thud as the mattresses were ripped from the twin beds where they had slept together hip to hip. Booming as Jack struck the walls indiscriminately with the mallet.

There was nothing of the real Jack in that howling, maundering, petulant voice, though. It alternately whined in tones of self-pity and rose in lurid screams, it reminded her chillingly of the screams that sometimes rose in the geriatrics ward of the hospital where she had worked summers as a high school kid. Senile dementia. Jack wasn't out there anymore. She was hearing the lunatic, raving voice of the Overlook itself.

The mallet smashed into the bathroom door, knocking out a huge chunk of the thin paneled. Half of a crazed and working face stared in at her. The mouth and cheeks and throat were lathered in blood, the single eye she could see was tiny and piggyb and glittering.

"Nowhere left to run, you cunt!" It panted at her through its grin. The mallet descended again, knocking wood splinters into the tub and against the reflecting surface of the medicine cabinet.

(II The medicine cabinet II)

A desperate whining noise began to escape her as she whined, pain temporarily forgotten, and threw the mirror door of the cabinet back. She began to paw through its contents. Behind her the hoarse voice bellowed. Here I come now. Here I come now you pig. It was demolishing the door in a machine-like frenzy.

Bottles and jars fell before her madly searching fingers—cough syrup, Vaseline, Clarol Herbal Essence shampoo, hydrogen peroxide, benzocaine—they fell into the sink and shattered.

Her hand closed over the dispenser of double-edged razor blades just as she heard the hand again fumbling for the bolt and the spring lock.

She snatched one of the razor blades out, a single one, not from a shaving brush, the gasps. She saw that the blade was sharp. She whirled around and slashed at the towel, which had been on the bed and was now on the floor for her.

Jack's face, neck, and hair was jerked back.

Placing the long razor blade between her thumb and index finger she was cutting him, cutting away. He did not move. He screamed again, trying to get his other hand, and she slashed at him again. The razor blade struck a table, the blade flying in the air and dropped to the floor by the toilet.

Wesley stepped and her blade out of the dispenser and was a

Movement in the other room—

(?? going away ??)

And a sound coming through the bedroom window. A moan. A high, insectile buzzing sound.

A roar of anger from Jack and then, very slowly, she was sure of it—he was leaving the caretaker's apartment, pushing through the wreckage and out into the hall.

"Someone coming a ranger Jack Hermann?"

"Oh God," she had cried brokenly through a mind that seemed filled with broken sticks and old sawdust. "Oh God, oh please."

She had to leave now, had to go find her son so they could face the rest of this nightmare side by side. She reached up and tumbled at the bolt. Her arm seemed to stretch for miles. At last she got it to come free. She pushed the door open, staggered out, and was suddenly overcome by the horrible certainty that Jack had only pretended to leave, that he was lying in wait for her.

Wesley looked around. The room was empty, the living room too. Jumbled, broken stuff everywhere.

The closet? Empty.

Then the soft shades of gray began to wash over her and she fell down on the mattress Jack had ripped from the bed, semiconscious.

53

HALLORANN LAID
LOW

Hallorann reached, he overturned the snowmobile just as a note and a half away Wendy was pulling herself around the corner and into the short hallway leading to the caretaker's apartment.

It wasn't the snowmobile he wanted but the gascan held onto the back by a pair of elastic strips. His hands, still clad in Howard Cottrell's blue mittens, seized the top strap and pulled it free as the heave and roared behind him—a sound that seemed to be more in his head than outside of it. A hard, brambly slap to his left leg making the knee sing with pain as it was driven in a way the motor had never been expected to bend. A groan escaped Hallorann's clenched teeth. I would come for the kill any time now, tired of playing with him.

He fumbled for the second strap. Sticky blood ran in his eyes.

(Roar! Slap!)

That one raked across his buttocks, a most tumbling him over and away from the snowmobile again. He held on—no exaggeration—for dear life.

Then he had freed the second strap. He clutched the gascan to him as he lion struck again, rolling him over on his back. He saw it again only a shadow in the darkness and falling snow as high, marish as a moving gargoyle. Hallorann twisted at the car's cap as the moving shadow stalked him, kicking up snowpuffs. As it moved on again the cap spun free, releasing the pungent smell of the gasoline.

Hallorann gained his knees and as it came at him, lowing and incredibly quick, he splashed it with the gas.

There was a hissing, spitting sound and it drew back.

"Gas!" Hallorann cried, his voice shrill and breaking. "Gonna burn you, baby! O g on it awhile!"

The lion came at him again, still spuming angrily. Hademann sidashed to the left, but this time the lion didn't give. It charged ahead. Hademann seemed to hear rather than saw its head angling at his face and he threw himself backward, partially avoiding it. Yet the lion's teeth hit his upper rib cage a glancing blow and a flare of pain struck there. Gas gurgled out of his car which he still held, and a cold frosty light faded and arms went as death.

New feelings in his back in a snow a gel. In the right of the snowmen blue by about ten paces. The hissing lion was a be king presence to his left closing in again. Hademann thought he could see its tail twitching.

He yanked Carrel's mitten off his right hand, tasting sodden wool and gasoline. He ripped up the hem of the parka and jammed his hand into his pants pocket. Down in there, along with his keys and his change, was a very battered old Zippo lighter. He had bought it in Germany in 1954. Once the hinge had broken and he had returned it to the Zippo factory and they had repaired it without charge just as advertised.

A nightmare flood of thoughts floodng through his mind in a split second.

(Dear Zippo my lighter was swallowed by a crocodile dropped from an airplane lost in the Pacific trench saved me from a Kraut bullet in the Battle of the Bulge dear Zippo if this tucker doesn't go that lion is going to rip my head off)

The lighter was out. He cocked the hood back. The lion rushing at him, a growl like ripping cloth, his finger flicking the striker wheel, spark, flame.

(my hand)

His gasoline-soaked hand, suddenly a blaze, the flames running up the sleeve of the parka. No pain, no pain yet, the lion shying from the torch suddenly blazing in front of it, a hideous blackening hedge sculpture with eyes and a mouth, shying away too late.

Winning at the pain Hademann drove his blazing arm into its stiff and scratchy side.

In an instant the whole creature was in flames, a prancing, withering pyre on the snow. It bellowed in rage and pain, seeming to chase its flaming tail as it zigzagged away from Hademann.

He thrust his own arm deep into the snow, killing the flames, unable to take his eyes from the hedge lion's death agonies for a moment. Then, gasping, he got to his feet. The arm of Durkin's

parka was soured but not burned, and what also described his head. Thirty yards down from where he stood the hedge lion had turned into a fireball. Sparks flew at the sky and were viciously stretched away by the wind. For a moment its ribs and skull were eaten in orange flame and then it seemed to collapse disintegrating into separate burning pieces.

(Never mind it. Get moving.)

He picked up the gascan and struggled over to the snowmobile. His consciousness seemed to be flickering in and out, offering him cuttings and snippets of home movies but never the whole picture. In one of these he was aware of yanking the snowmobile back onto its tread and then sitting on it out of breath and incapable of moving for a few moments. In another he was reaching for the gascan which was still half full. His head was thumping horribly from the gasfumes (and in reaction to his battle with the hedge lion, he supposed) and he saw by the steaming hole in the snow beside him that he had vomited, but he was unable to remember when.

The snowmobile's engine still warm fired immediately. He twisted the throttle unevenly and started forward with a series of neck-snapping jerks that made his head ache even more fiercely. At first the snowmobile wove drunkenly from side to side, but by half-standing to get his face above the windscreen and into the sharp cooling blast of the wind, he drove some of the swerve out of himself. He opened the throttle wider.

(Where are the rest of the hedge animals?)

He didn't know, but at least he wouldn't be caught unaware again.

The Overlook loomed in front of him, the lighted first-floor windows throwing long yellow rectangles onto the snow. The gate at the foot of the drive was locked and he dismounted after a wary look around, praying he hadn't lost his keys when he pulled his lighter out of his pocket—no, they were there. He picked through them in the bright light thrown by the snowmobile headlamp. He found the right one and unsnapped the padlock, letting it drop into the snow. At first he didn't think he was going to be able to move the gate anyway—he pawed frantically at the snow surrounding it, disregarding the throbbing agony in his head and the fear that one of the other lions might be creeping up behind him. He managed to pull it a foot and a half away from the

gate," squeezed into the gap and pushed. He got it to move another two or three inches, but for he snowmobile and threaded it through.

It took him a second or two to find his way in the dark. The nightgowns of the three were draped on the back of the Overbrook, and he found his way out. He was out. The snowmobile. The dog's nose was his guide. He was on his feet.

Hallmann opened the front door and the snowmobile came forward, puffing snow up behind it. In the candlemaker's apartment, Jack Terrence's head jerked around at the huge, wasp-like buzz of the approaching engine and suddenly began to move laboriously toward the hallway again. The bitch wasn't important now. The bitch could wait. Now it was this dirty nigger's turn. This dirty, interloping nigger with his nose in where it didn't belong. First him and then his son. He would show them. He would show them that that he—that he was of managerial timber.

Outside, the snowmobile rocked along faster and faster. The hotel seemed to surge toward it. Snow flew in Hallmann's face. The headlamps' oncoming glare spotlighted the hedge shepherd's face, its blank and soulless eyes.

Then it shrank away, leaving an opening. Hallmann yanked at the snowmobile's steering gear with his remaining strength, and it kicked around in a sharp semicircle, throwing up clouds of snow threatening to tip over. The rear end's ruck the foot of the porch steps and rebounded. Hallmann was off in a flash and running up the steps. He stumbled, fell, picked himself up. The dog was growling—again in his head—close behind him. Something ripped at the shoulder of the parka and then he was in the porch, standing in the narrow corridor Jack had snowed through the snow, and safe. They were too big to fit in here.

He reached the big double doors which gave on the lobby and dug for his keys again. While he was getting them he tried the knob and it turned freely. He pushed his way in.

"Danny!" He cried hoarsely. "Danny, where are you?"

Silence came back.

His eyes traveled across the lobby to the foot of the wide stairs and a harsh gasp escaped him. The rug was splashed and matted with blood. There was a scrap of pink terrycloth robe. The trail of blood led up the stairs. The banister was also splashed with it.

"Oh Jesus," he muttered, and raised his voice again. "Danny! DANNY!"

The hotel's silence seemed to mock him with echoes which were almost there, shy and oblique.

(*Danny? Who's Danny? Anybody here know a Danny? Danny, Danny, who's got the Danny? Anybody for a game of spin the Danny? Pin the tail on the Danny? Get out of here black boy. No one here knows Danny from Adam.*)

Jesus, had he come through everything just to be too late? Had it been done?

He ran up the stairs two at a time and stood at the top of the first floor. The blood led down toward the caretaker's apartment. Horror crept softly into his veins and into his brain as he began to walk toward the short hall. The hedge animals had been bad, but this was worse. In his heart he was already sure of what he was going to find when he got down there.

He was in no hurry to see it.

Jack had been hiding in the elevator when Halorann came up the stairs. Now he crept up behind the figure in the snow-coated parka, a blood- and gore-streaked phantom with a snarl upon its face. The roque mallet was lifted as high as the ugly, ripping pain in his back.

(*?? did the bitch suck me can't remember ??*)

would know

"Black boy," he whispered. "I'll teach you to go sticking your nose in other people's business."

Halorann heard the whisper and began to turn, to duck, and the roque mallet whistled down. The hood of the parka matted the blow, but not enough. A rocket exploded in his head, leaving a contrail of stars . . . and then nothing.

He staggered against the silk wallpaper and Jack hit him again, the roque mallet slicing sideways this time, shattering Halorann's cheekbone and most of the teeth on the left side of his jaw. He went down limply.

"Now," Jack whispered. "Now, by Christ." Where was Danny? He had business with his trespassing son.

* * *

Three minutes later the elevator door banged open on the shadowed third floor. Jack Torrance was not alone. The car had

stopped only halfway into the doorway and he had to boost himself up onto the next floor, wriggling painfully like a crippled thing. He dragged the splintered rogue mallet after him. Outside the eaves, the wind howled and roared. Jack's eyes rolled wildly in their sockets. There was blood and confusion in his hair.

His son was up there, up here somewhere. He could feel it. Left to his own devices, he might do anything: scribble on the expensive silk wall paper with his crayons, deface the furnishings, break the windows. He was a liar and a cheat and he would have to be chastised . . . harshly.

Jack Torrance struggled to his feet.

"Danny?" he called. "Danny, come here a minute, will you? You've done something wrong and I want you to come and take your medicine like a man, Danny? *Danny!*"

54

TONY

(*Danny*)

(*Dannness . . .*)

Darkness and hallways. He was wandering through darkness and hallways that were like those which lay within the body of the hotel but were somehow different. The silk-papered walls stretched up and up, and even when he craned his neck, Danny could not see the ceiling. It was lost in darkness. All the doors were locked, and they also rose up to darkness. Below the peepholes (in these giant doors they were the size of gunights) tiny skulls and crossbones had been boled to each door instead of room numbers.

And somewhere, Tony was calling him.

(*Dannness . . .*)

There was a pounding noise and he knew well and hoarse shouts, faint with distance. He could not make out words for words, but he knew the text well enough by now. He had heard it before, in dreams and awake.

He paused, a little boy not yet three years out of diapers, and

tried to decide where he was, where he might be. There was fear, but it was a fear he could live with. He had been afraid every day for two months now to a degree that ranged from dull disquiet to outright, mind-bending terror. This he could live with. But he wanted to know why Tony had come, why he was making the sound of his name in this hall was neither a part of real things nor of the dreamland where Tony sometimes showed him things. Why, where—

"Danny "

Far down the giant hallway almost as dimly as Danny himself, was a dark figure. Tony

"Where am I?" he called softly to Tony

"Sleeping." Tony said "Sleeping in your mommy and daddy's bedroom." There was sadness in Tony's voice

"Danny " Tony said "Your mother is going to be badly hurt. Perhaps killed. Mr. Hallorann, too."

"No!"

He tried to hold on a distant grief a terror that seemed damped by these dreamy, dreary surroundings. Nonetheless, death images came to him. Dead frog plastered to the turnpike like a grisly stamp. Daddy's broken watch lying on top of a box of junk to be thrown out. Gravesites with a dead person under every one. Dead day by the telephone pole, the cold tank. Mommy scraped off the plates and down the dark maw of the garbage disposal.

Yet he could not equate these simple symbols with the shifting complex reality of his mother. She satisfied his childish definition of eternity. She had been when he was not. She would continue to be when he was not again. He could accept the possibility of his own death, he had dealt with that since the encounter in Room 217.

But not hers.

Not Daddy's.

Not ever.

He began to struggle and the darkness and the hallway began to waver. Tony's form became chimerical, mistlike.

"Don't," Tony called. "Don't, Danny. Don't do that."

"She's not going to be dead! *She's not!*"

"Then you have to help her. Danny. . . . you're in a place deep down in your own mind. The place where I am. I'm a part of you, Danny."

You're Tony. You're not me. I want my mommy. I want my mommy . . .

"I didn't bring you here, Danny. You brought yourself. Because you knew."

"No—"

You've always known. I was involved, and he began to walk closer. For the first time, Tony began to walk closer. You're deep down in yourself in a place where nothing comes through. We're alone here for a while while, Danny. This is an Overlook where no one can ever come. No clocks work here. None of the keys fit them and they can never be wound up. The doors have never been opened and no one has ever stayed in the rooms. But you can't stay long. Because it's coming."

"It—" Danny whispered fearfully, and as he did so the irregular pounding noise seemed to grow closer, louder. His terror cool and distant a moment ago, became a more immediate thing. Now the words could be made out. Hoarse huckstering, they were uttered in a coarse imitation of his father's voice, but it wasn't Daddy. He knew that now. He knew.

(You brought yourself. Because you knew.)

"Oh Tony, *isn't my daddy?*" Danny screamed. *Is it my daddy that's coming to get me?*"

Tony didn't answer. But Danny didn't need an answer. He knew. A long and nightmarish masquerade party went on here, and had gone on for years. Little by little a force had accrued, as secret and silent as interest in a bank account. Force, presence, shape, they were all only words and none of them mattered. It wore many masks, but it was all one. Now somewhere, it was coming for him. It was hiding behind Daddy's face, it was imitating Daddy's voice, it was wearing Daddy's clothes.

But it was not his daddy.

It was not his daddy.

"I've got to help them!" he cried.

And now Tony stood directly in front of him, and looking at Tony was like looking into a magic mirror and seeing himself in ten years. The eyes widely spaced and very dark, the chin firm, the mouth handsomely molded. The hair was light blond like his mother's, and yet the stamp on his features was that of his father as a Tony—as if the Daniel Anthony Torrance that would some-

day he—was a hadling caught between father and son, a ghost of both, a fusion.

"You have to try to help," Tony said. "But your father be's with the hotel now, Danny. It's where he wants to be. It wants you too, because it's very greedy."

Tony walked past him into the shadows.

"Wait!" Danny cried. "What can I—"

"He's close now," Tony said, still walking away. "You'll have to run. Hide. . . keep away from him. Keep away."

"Tony, I can't!"

"But you've already started," Tony said. "You will remember what your father forgot."

He was gone.

And from somewhere near his father's voice came, coldly wheedling, "Danny? You can come out, doc. Just a little spanking, that's all. Take it like a man and it will be all over. We don't need her, doc. Just you and me, right? When we get this little spanking . . . behind us, it will be just you and me."

Danny ran.

Behind him, the thing's temper broke through the shambling charade of normality.

Come here, you little shut! Right, now!"

Down a long hall, panting and gasping. Around a corner. Up a flight of stairs. And as he went, the walls that had been so high and remote began to come down, the rug which had only been a blur beneath his feet took on the familiar black and blue pattern, sinuously woven together, the doors became numbered again and behind them the parties that were all one went on and on, populated by generations of guests. The air seemed to be shimmering around him, the blows of the mallet against the walls echoing and re-echoing. He seemed to be bursting through some thin placental womb from sleep to

* * *

the rug outside the Presidential Suite on the third floor, lying near him in a bloody heap were the bodies of two men dressed in suits and narrow ties. They had been taken out by shotgun blasts and now they began to stir in front of him and get up.

He drew in breath to scream but didn't.

("FALSE FACE" (NOT REAL"))

They faded before his gaze like old photographs and were gone.

But he saw him, the faint sound of the mallet against the walls went on and on, crawling up through the elevator shaft and he saw it! The unrolling force of the Overlook, in the shape of a taller, older blundering giant and on the first floor.

A door opened with a thin screening sound behind him.

A decayed woman in a rotten silk gown pranced out, her yellowed and spitting fingers dressed with verdgris-caked rings. Heavy-bodied wasps crawled sluggishly over her face.

"Come in," she whispered to him, grinning with black lips. "Come in and we will dance the tassaango."

"False face," he hissed. "Not real!" She drew back from him in alarm, and in the act of drawing back she faded and was gone.

"Where are you?" it screamed, but the voice was still only in his head. He could still hear the thing that was wearing Jack's face down on the first floor—and something else.

The high whistling sound of an approaching motor.

Daddy's breath stopped in his throat, with a little gasp. Was it just another face of the hotel, another illusion? Or was it Dick? He wanted, wanted desperately to believe it was Dick, but he didn't dare take the chance.

He retreated down the main corridor and then took one of the off-shoots, his feet whispering on the nap of the carpet. Looked down frowned down at him as they had done in the dreams, the visions, only now he was in the world of real things, where the game was played for keeps.

He turned to the right and came to a hall. His heart thumping heavily in his chest. Heat was blowing around his ankles. From the registers, of course. This must have been Daddy's day to heat the west wing and

(You will remember what you do to her first?)

What was it? He almost knew. Something that might have been a Mommy? But Terry had said he would have to do it himself. What was it?

He sank down against the wall, trying desperately to think. It was so hard—the hole kept trying to get into his head—the image of that dark and sumped form swinging the mallet from side to side, gouging the wallpaper—sending out puffs of paper dust.

"Help me," he muttered. "Tony, help me."

And suddenly he became aware that the hotel had grown deathly silent. The whining sound of the motor had stopped.

(must not have been real)

and the sounds of the party had stopped and here was only the wind howling and whooping endlessly

The elevator whirled into sudden life.

It was coming up.

And Danny knew who—*what*—was in it.

He bolted to his feet, eyes staring wildly. Panic clutched around his heart. Why had Tony sent him to the third floor? He was trapped up here. All the doors were locked.

The attic!

There was an attic, he knew. He had come up here with daddy the day he had sailed the rattraps around up there. He hadn't allowed Danny to come up with him because of the rats. He was afraid Danny might be bitten. But the trapdoor which led to the attic was set into the ceiling of the last short corridor in this wing. There was a pole leaning against the wall. Daddy had pushed the trapdoor open with the pole, there had been a ratcheting whirr of counterweights as the door went up and a ladder had swung down. If he could get up there and pull the ladder after him.

Somewhere in the maze of corridors behind him, the elevator came to a stop. There was a metallic, rattling crash as the gate was thrown back. And then a voice—not in his head now but terribly real—called out: "Danny? Danny, come here a minute, will you. You've done something wrong and I want you to come and take your medicine like a man. Danny? *Danny*."

Obedience was so strongly ingrained in him that he actually took two automatic steps toward the sound of that voice before stopping. His hands curled into fists at his sides.

(*Not real! False! Yes, I know what you are. Take off your mask!*)

"*Danny!*" it roared. "Come here, you pig! Come here and take it like a man!" A loud, hollow boom as the machine struck the wall. When the voice roared out his name again it had changed its location. It had come closer.

In the world of real things the hand was beginning.

Danny ran. Feet silent on the heavy carpet, he ran past the closed doors, past the white figures in wallpaper panels, he ran exte-

guisher bolted to the corner of the wall. He hesitated, and then plunged down the final corridor. Nothing at the end but a bolted door, and nowhere left to run.

But the pole was still there, still leaning against the wall where Daddy had left it.

Danny snatched it up. He craned his neck to stare up at the trap door. There was a hook on the end of the pole and you had to catch it on a ring set into the trapdoor. You had to—

There was a brand-new Yale padlock dangling from the trapdoor. The lock Jack Terrance had clipped around the hasp after laying his traps, just in case his son should take the notion into his head to go exploring up there someday.

Locked. Terror swept him.

Behind him it was coming, blundering and staggering past the Presidential Suite, the mallet whistling viciously through the air.

Danny backed up against the last closed door and waited for it.

55

THAT WHICH WAS FORGOTTEN

Wendy came to a little at a time, the grayness draining away, pain replacing it—her back, her leg, her side—she didn't think she would be able to move. Even her fingers hurt, and at first she didn't know why.

(The razor blade, that's why.)

Her blond hair, now dank and matted, hung in her eyes. She brushed it away and her ribs stabbed inside, making her groan. Now she saw a field of blue and white mattress, spotted with blood. Her blood, or maybe Jack's. Either way it was still fresh. She hadn't been out long. And that was important because—

(Why?)

Because—

It was the insectile, buzzing sound of the motor that she remembered first. For a moment she fixed stupidly on the memory, and

then in a single vertiginous and nauseating swoop, her mind seemed to pan back, showing her everything at once.

Halorann. It must have been Halorann. Why else would Jack have left so suddenly, without finishing it . . . without finishing her?

Because he was no longer a leisure. He had to find Danny quickly and . . . and do it before Hawkman could put a stop to it.

Or had it happened already?

She could hear the whistle of the elevator rising up the shaft.

(No! God please no the blood the blood's still fresh don't let it have happened already)

Somehow she was able to find her feet and stagger through the bedroom and across the ruins of the living room to the shattered front door. She pushed it open and made it out into the hall.

"Danny!" she cried, wincing at the pain in her chest. "Mr Halorann. Is anybody here? *Anybody?*"

The elevator had been running again and now it came to a stop. She heard the metallic crash of the gate being thrown back and then thought she heard a speaking voice. It might have been her imagination. The wind was too loud to really be able to tell.

Leaning against the wall, she made her way up to the corner of the short hallway. She was about to turn the corner when the scream froze her. Flung down the stairwell and the elevator shaft.

Danny! Come here you pup. Come here and take a little a man!

Jack. On the second or third floor. Looking for Danny.

She got around the corner, stumbled, almost fell. Her breath caught in her throat. Something.

(someone?)

huddled against the wall about a quarter of the way down from the stairwell. She began to hurry faster, wincing every time her weight came down on her hurt leg. It was a man, she saw, and as she drew closer, she understood the meaning of that buzzing motor.

It was Mr. Halorann. He had come after all.

She eased to her knees beside him, offering up an incoherent prayer that he was not dead. His nose was bleeding, and a terrible gout of blood had spilled out of his mouth. The side of his face was a puffed purple bruise. But he was breathing, thank God for

that I was coming in long, harsh draws that shook his whole frame

Looking at him more closely Wendy's eyes widened. One arm of the parka he was wearing was blackened and singed. One side of it had been ripped open. There was blood in his hair and a small, wet, ugly scratch down the back of his neck.

My God, what's happened to him?

Danny, the hoarse, guttural voice roared from above them. "Get out here goddammit!"

There was no time to wonder about it now. She began to shake him, her face twisting at the flare of agony in her ribs. Her side felt hot and massive and swollen.

(What if they're poking my lung whenever I move?)

There was no help for this either. If Jack found Danny he would kill him, beat him to death with the mallet as he had tried to do to her.

So she shook Halorann, and then began to slap the unbruised side of his face lightly.

"Wake up," she said. "Mr. Halorann, you've got to wake up. Please . . . please . . ."

From overhead, the restless booming sounds of the mallet as Jack Torrance looked for his son.

* * *

Danny stood with his back against the door, looking at the right angle where the hallways joined. The steady, irregular booming sound of the mallet against the walls grew louder. The thing that was after him screamed and howled and cursed. Dream and reality had joined together without a seam.

It came around the corner.

In a way, what Danny felt was relief. It was not his father. The mask of face and body had been ripped and shredded and made into a bad joke. It was not his daddy, not this Saturday Night Shock Show horror with its rolling eyes and bunched and bulging shoulders and blood-drenched shirt. It was not his daddy.

"Now, by God," it breathed. It wiped its lips with a shaking hand. "Now you'll find out who is the boss around here. You'll see. It's not you they want. It's me. *Me Me!*"

It slashed out with the scarred hammer, its double head now shapeless and splintered with countless impacts. It struck the wall,

cutting a circle in the silk paper. Plaster dust puffed out. It began to grin.

"Let's see you pull any of your fancy tricks now," it muttered. "I wasn't born yesterday, you know. Didn't just fall off the hay track, by God. I'm going to do my fatherly duty by you, boy."

Danny said, "You're not my daddy."

It stopped. For a moment, it actually looked uncertain, as if not sure who or what it was. Then it began to walk again. The hammer whistled out, struck a door panel and made it boom loudly.

"You're a liar," it said. "Who else would I be? I have the two birthmarks, I have the cupped navel, even the pecker, my boy. Ask your mother."

"You're a mask," Danny said. "Just a false face. The only reason the hotel needs to use you is that you aren't as dead as the others. But when it's done with you, you won't be anything at all. You don't scare me."

"I'll scare you," it howled. The mask whistled fiercely down, smashing into the rug between Danny's feet. Danny didn't flinch. "You lied about me! You connived with her! You plotted against me! And you cheated! You copied that final exam!" The eyes glared out at him from beneath the furrowed brows. There was an expression of fanatic cunning in them. "I'll find it, too. It's down in the basement somewhere, I find it. They promised me I could look at it, I want it." It raised the mask again.

"Yes, they promised," Danny said, "but they lie."

The mask hesitated at the top of its swing.

* * *

Hallorann had begun to come around, but Wendy had stopped pacing his cheeks. A moment ago the words *You cheated! You copied that final exam!* had flooded down through the elevator shaft, dimly and bare over the wind. From somewhere deep in the west wing. She was nearly convinced they were on the third floor and that Jack—whatever had taken possession of Jack—had found Danny. There was nothing she or Hallorann could do now.

"Oh God," she murmured. Tears blurred her eyes.

"Son of a bitch broke my jaw," Hallorann muttered thickly, "and my head . . ." He worked to sit up. His right eye was pumping rapidly and swelling shut. Still, he saw Wendy.

"Missus Torrance—"

"Shhhh," she said.

"Where is he, Missus Torrance?"

"On the hill," she said. "With his father."

* * *

"Look," Danny said again. "Something has gone through his mind. It's like a meteor, too quick, too bright to catch and hold. All you have left of the thought remains."

(You will never see the bad men, anywhere.)

(You will remember when you are older.)

"You . . . you shouldn't speak that way to your father!" said himself. The market trembled, came down. "You'll only make things worse for yourself. Your . . . your punishment. Worse." It suggested drunkenly and stared at him with maudlin sympathy that began to turn to hate. The market began to rise again.

"You're not my daddy." Danny said it again. "And if there's a little bit of my daddy left inside you, he knows they're here. Everything is a lie and a cheat. Like the loaded dice my daddy got for my Christmas stocking last Christmas. Like the presents they put in the store windows and my daddy says there's nothing in them, no presents, they're just empty boxes. Just for show, my daddy says. You're not my daddy. You're the hotel. And when you get what you want, you won't give my daddy anything because you're selfish. And my daddy knows that. You had to make him drink the Bad Stuff. That's the only way you could get him. You lying false face."

"Liar. Liar." The words came in a thin shriek. The market wavered wudly in the air.

"Go on and hit me. But you'll never get what you want from me."

The face in front of him changed. It was harder to say how there was no melting or merging of the features. The body trembled slightly, and then the bloody hands opened like broken claws. The market fell from them and thumped to the rug. That was all. But suddenly his daddy was there, looking at him in mortal agony, and a sorrow so great that Danny's heart flamed with it in his chest. The mouth drew down in a quivering bow.

"Doc." Jack Torrance said. "Run away. Quick. And remember how much I love you."

"No," Danny said.

"Oh Danny, for God's sake. "

No," Danny said. He took one of his father's bloody hands and kissed it, "It's almost over."

* * *

Halloran got to his feet by propping his back against the wall and pushing himself up. He and Wendy stared at each other like nightmare survivors from a bombed hospital.

"We got to get up here," he said. "We have to help him."

Her haunted eyes stared into his from her chalk-pale face. "It's too late," Wendy said. "Now he can only help himself."

A minute passed, then two. Three. And they heard it above them, screaming, not in anger or triumph now, but in mortal terror.

"Dear God," Halloran whispered. "What's happening?"

"I don't know," she said.

"Has it killed him?"

"I don't know."

The elevator dashed into life and began to descend with one screaming, raving thing pinned up inside.

* * *

Danny stood without moving. There was no place he could run where the Overlook was not. He recognized it suddenly, fully, painlessly. For the first time in his life he had an adult thought, an adult feeling, the essence of his experience in this bad place—a sorrowful distillation.

(Mommy and Daddy can't help me and I'm alone)

"Go away," he said to the bloody stranger in front of him. "Go on. Get out of here."

It bent over, exposing the knife handle on its back. Its hands closed around the mallet again, but instead of aiming at Danny it reversed the handle, aiming the hard side of the square mallet at its own face.

Understanding rushed through Danny.

Then the mallet began to rise and descend, destroying the last of Jack Torrance's image. The thing in the hall danced an eerie-shuffling polka, the beat counterpointed by the hideous sound of

"The ball's back striking again and again. Black splattered across the wall paper. Stands of hair escaped from the air and broken into shreds. It was impossible to say just how long it went on. But when it stopped, as it often did back in Danny's father was gone forever. What a look of the face became a stranger, something that had been mixed up perfectly. Danny saw the white of the 77. The original one angry boy thing he had seen in the concrete ring.

"Ma asked what it was, asked. No more explanations."

The matter rose for the day, the A. J. King sound filled Danny's ears.

"Any thing else to say?" it occurred. "Are you sure you wouldn't like to run? A game of tag, perhaps? All we have is time, you know. An eternity of time. Or so we end it. Might as well. After all, we're missing the party."

It ground with broken too head green.

Aid came to him. What his father had forgotten.

Sudden triumph lit his face, the thing saw it and hesitated, puzzled.

The boiler! Danny screamed. *"I haven't been dumped since this morning! It's going up! It's going to explode!"*

An expression of grotesque terror and dawning realization swept across the broken features of the thing in front of him. The metal dropped from its fixed hands and bounced harmlessly on the black and blue rug.

"The boiler!" cried. "Oh no! That can't be allowed. Certainly not. No. You goddamned little pup! Certainly not! Oh, oh, oh!"

It is! Danny cried back at it fiercely. He began to stifle and shake his fists at the ruined thing before him. Any minute now I know it. The boiler, Daddy forgot the boiler! *And you forgot it, too!"*

"No, oh no it mustn't. Can't, you dirty little boy. I'll make you take your medicine. I'll make you take every drop. oh no, oh no—"

It suddenly turned and began to shamble away. For a moment its shadow blotted on the wall, waxing and waning. It trailed cries behind itself like walnut party streamers.

Moments later the clava or crashed it to the

Suddenly the shining was on him

(mommy mr hallorann dick to mr friends together alive they're alive got to get out it's going to blow going to blow sky high)

like a fierce and glaring sunrise and he ran. One foot kicked the bloody man's open robe and set it aside. He didn't notice.

Crying, he ran for the stairs.

They had to get out.

56

THE EXPLOSION

Halorann could never be sure of the progression of things after that. He remembered that the elevator had gone down and past them without stopping, and something had been inside. But he made no attempt to try to see in through the small diamond-shaped window, because what was in there did not sound human. A moment later there were running footsteps on the stairs. Weir and Torrance at first sank back against him and then began to stumble down the main corridor to the stairs as fast as they could.

"Danny! Danny! Oh thank God! Thank God!"

She swept him into a hug, groaning with joy as well as her pain.
(*Danny.*)

Danny looked at him from his mother's arms, and Halorann saw how the boy had changed. His face was pale and pinched, his eyes dark and fathomless. He looked as if he had lost weight. Looking at the two of them together, Halorann thought it was the mother who looked younger, in spite of the terrible beating she had taken.

(Dick: we have to go—run—the place—it's going to)

Picture of the Overlook flames sapping out of its roof. Bricks raving down on the snow. Clang of firebeds. . . . not that any fire truck would be able to get up here much before the end of March. Most of all what came through in Danny's thought was a sense of urgent immediacy, a feeling that it was going to happen *at any time*.

"All right," Halorann said. He began to move toward the twin

if room and at first it was like swimming through deep water. His sense of balance was screwed and the eye on the right side of his face didn't want to focus. His jaw was sending giant throbbing bursts of pain up his neck and down his neck and his cheeks were as large as a champagne bottle. The boys suddenly had gotten him going, and it got a little easier.

"All right?" Wendy asked. She looked from Hallorann to her son and back to Hallorann. "What are you afraid of, son?"

"We have to go," Hallorann said.

"I'm not dressed in my clothes!"

Danny darted out of her arms then and raced down the corridor. She looked after him and as he vanished around the corner, back at Hallorann. "What if he comes back?"

"Your husband?"

"He's not Jack," she murmured. "Jack's dead. This place killed him. *This damned place*." She struck at the wall with her fist and cried out at the pain in her cut fingers. "It's the horror, isn't it?"

"Yes, ma'am. Danny says it's going to explode."

"Good." The word was uttered with dead finality. "I don't know if I can get down those stairs again. My ribs—he broke my ribs. And something on my back—it hurts."

"You'll make it," Hallorann said. "We'll all make it." But suddenly he remembered the huge animals and wondered what they would do if they were guarding the way out.

Then Danny was coming back. He had Wendy's boots and coat and gloves, also his own coat and gloves.

"Danny," she said, "Your boots."

"It's too late," he said. His eyes stared at them with a desperate kind of madness. He looked at Dick and suddenly Hallorann's mind was fixed with an image of a clock under a glass dome, the clock in the ball room that had been donated by a Swiss diplomat in 1949. The hands of the clock were standing at a minute to midnight.

"Oh my God," Hallorann said. "Oh my dear God."

He clapped an arm around Wendy and picked her up. He cupped his other arm around Danny. He ran for the stairs.

Wendy shrieked in pain as he squeezed the bad ribs, as something in her back ground together, but Hallorann did not slow. He plunged down the stairs with them in his arms. One eye wide

and desperate, the other puffed shut to a slit. He looked like a one-eyed pirate abducting hostages to be ransomed later.

Suddenly the shine was on him, and he understood what Danny had meant when he said it was too late. He could feel the explosion getting ready to rumble up from the basement and tear the guts out of this horrid place.

He ran faster, boring headlong across the lobby toward the double doors.

* * *

It hurried across the basement and into the feeble yellow glow of the furnace room's only light. It was slobbering with fear. It had been so close, so close to having the boy and the boy's remarkable power. It could not lose now. It must not happen. It would dump the boiler and then chastise the boy harshly.

"Mustn't happen!" it cried. "Oh no, mustn't happen!"

It stumbled across the floor to the boiler, which glowed a dull red halfway up its long tubular body. It was huffing and rattling and hissing off plumes of steam in a hundred directions, like a monster cankape. The pressure needle stood at the far end of the dial.

"It *will* be done!" the manager-careaker cried.

It laid its Jack Torrance hands on the valve, unmindful of the burning smelt which arose or the searing of the flesh as the red-hot wheel sank in, as it into a mudrut.

The wheel gave, and with a triumphant scream, the thing spun it wide open. A giant roar of escaping steam belowed out of the boiler, a dozen dragons hissing in concert. But before the steam obscured the pressure needle entirely, the needle had visibly begun to swing back.

"I WIN!" it cried. It capered obscenely in the hot, rising mist, waving its flaming hands over its head. **NOT TOO LATE. I WIN. NOT TOO LATE. NOT TOO LATE. NOT.**

Words turned into a shriek of triumph, and the shriek was swallowed in a shattering roar as the Overlook's boiler exploded.

* * *

Half-rain burst out through the double doors and carried the two of them through the trench in the big snowdrift on the porch.

He saw the huge animals clearly, more clearly than before and even as he realized his worst fears were true, that they were between the porch and the snowmobile, the hotel exploded. It seemed to him that it happened all at once, although later he knew his confusion had been all way it happened.

There was a flash explosion, a sound that seemed to exist on one low all-pervasive note

(WHLMMMMMMMMMM—)

and then there was a burst of warm air at their backs that seemed to push gently at them. They were thrown from the porch on its breach, the breeze of them, and a confused thought

(this is what superman must feel like)

sipped through Hilbrann's mind as they flew through the air. He lost his hold on them and then he struck the snow in a soft blow. It was down his shirt and up his nose and he was dimly aware that it felt good on his hurt cheek.

Then he struggled to the top of it, for that moment not thinking about the huge animals or Wendy Terrance or even the boy. He rolled over on his back so he could watch the

* * *

The Overlook's windows shattered. In the ballroom the dome over the marzipane clock cracked, split in two pieces and fell to the floor. The clock stopped ticking, cogs and gears and balance wheel all became motionless. There was a whispered sighing noise, and a great billow of dust. In 217 the bath tub suddenly spilling water, letting out a small flood of greenish, noxious-smelling water. In the Presidential Suite the wallpaper suddenly burst into flames. The bowing doors of the Coronado Lounge suddenly snapped their hinges and fell to the dining room floor. Beyond the basement arch the great piles and stacks of old papers caught fire and went up with a bright torch hiss. Boiling water rolled over the flames but did not quench them. Like burning autumn leaves below a wasps' nest, they whirled and blackened. The furnace exploded, shattering the basement's iron beams, sending them crashing down like the bones of a dinosaur. The gases which had fed the furnace now poured up in a billowing pillar of flame through the river floor in the lobby. The carpeting on the stair risers caught, racing up to the first floor level as if to tell

dreadful good news. A fusillade of explosions ripped the place. The chandelier in the dining room, a two-hundred-pound crystal bomb, fell with a splintering crash, knocking tables every which way. Flame belched out of the Overlook's five chimneys at the breaking clouds.

(*No. Mustn't. Mustn't! MUSTN'T!*)

It shrieked, it shrieked but now it was voiceless and it was only screaming panic and doom and damnation in its own ear, dissolving, losing thought and will, the webbing falling apart, searching, not finding, going out, going out to, fleeing, going out to emptiness, nothingness, crumbling.

The party was over.

57

EXIT

The war shook the whole façade of the hotel. Glass belched out onto the snow and twinkled here like jagged diamonds. The hedgehog which had been approaching Danny and his mother, recoiled away from it. Its green and shadow-marbled ears flattened, its body coming down between its legs as its haunches flattened objectly. In his head Halvorann heard a whine fearfully and mixed with that sound was the fearful, confused yowling of the big cats. He struggled to his feet to go to the other two and leap them, and as he did so he saw something more nightmarish than a little rest: the hedge rabbit still coated with snow was battering itself crazy at the chambrak fence at the far end of the playground, and the steel mesh was ringing with a kind of nightmare music, like a spectral zither. Even from here he could hear the sounds of the coast-set wings and branches which made up its body creaking and crunching like breaking bones.

'Dick! Dick!' Danny cried out. He was trying to support his mother, he p her over to the snowmobile. The clothes he had carried out for her two of them were scattered; he was where they had fallen and where they now stood. Halvorann was suddenly

aware that the woman was in her nightclothes, Danny jacked less, and it was no more than ten above zero.

(my god she's in her bare feet)

He struggled back through the snow picking up her coat her boots, Danny's coat, odd gloves. Then he ran back to them, plunging up-deep in the snow from time to time, having no flounder his way out.

Wendy was horribly pale, the side of her neck coated with blood, blood that was now freezing.

"I can't," she muttered. She was no more than semiconscious.

"No, I . . . can't. Sorry."

Danny looked up at Hadorann pleadingly.

"Gonna be okay," Hadorann said, and gripped her again.

"Come on."

The three of them made it to where the snowmobile had stalled around and stalled out. Hadorann sat the woman down on the passenger seat and put her coat on. He lifted her feet up—they were very cold but not frozen yet—and rubbed them briskly with Danny's jacket before putting on her boots. Wendy's face was alabaster pale, her eyes half-lidded and dazed, but she had begun to shiver. Hadorann thought that was a good sign.

Behind them, a series of three explosions rocked the hotel. Orange flashes lit the snow.

Danny put his mouth close to Hadorann's ear and screamed something.

"What?"

"I said do you need that?"

The boy was pointing at the red gas can that he held at an angle in the snow.

"I guess we do."

He picked it up and snatched the fill gas in. Here, he couldn't tell how much. He attached the can to the back of the snowmobile fumbling the job several times before getting it right, because his fingers were going numb. For the first time he became aware that he'd lost Howard Cottrill's mittens.

(I get out of this & gonna have my sister and you a dozen pair mittens)

Get to. Hadorann started at the boy.

Danny shook back. "We'll freeze."

"We have to go around to the equipment shed! There's stuff in there . . . blankets . . . stuff like that. Get on behind your mother!"

Danny got on, and Halorann twisted his head so he could shout into Wendy's face.

"Missus Torrance. Hold onto me. You understand? *Hold on!*"

She put her arms around him and rested her cheek against his back. Halorann started the snowmobile and turned the throttle delicately so they would start up with out a jerk. The woman had the weakest sort of grip on him, and if she shifted backward, her weight would tumble both her and the boy off.

They began to move. He brought the snowmobile around in a circle and then they were traveling west parallel to the hotel. Halorann cut in more to circle around behind it to the equipment shed.

They had a momentary clear view into the Overlook's lobby. The gasflame coming up through the shattered floor was like a giant birthday candle, fierce yellow at its heart and blue around its flickering edges. In that moment it seemed only to be aglow, not destroying. They could see the registration desk with its silver bell, the credit card areas, the old-fashioned, scrolled cash register, the small figured throw rugs, the highbacked chairs, horsehair hassocks. Danny could see the small sofa by the fireplace where the three nuns had sat on the day they had come up—closing day. But this was the real closing day.

Then the drift on the porch blotted the view out. A moment later they were skirting the west side of the hotel. It was still light enough to see without the snowmobile's headlight. Both upper stories were flaming now, and pennants of flame shot out the windows. The gleaming white paint had begun to blacken and peel. The shutters which had covered the Presidential Suite's picture window—shutters Jack had carefully fastened as per instructions in mid-October—now hung in flaming brands, exposing the wide and shattered darkness behind them, like a toothless mouth yawning in a final, silent deathrattle.

Wendy had pressed her face against Halorann's back to cut out the wind, and Danny had likewise pressed his face against his mother's back, and so it was only Halorann who saw the truth thing, and he never spoke of it. From the window of the Presi-

dential Suite he thought he saw a huge dark shape issue, blotting out the snowfield behind it. For a moment it assumed the shape of a huge, obscene manta, and then the wind seemed to catch it, to tear it and shred it like old dark paper. It fragmented, was caught in a swirling eddy of smoke, and a moment later it was gone as if it had never been. But in those few seconds as it whirled blackly, dancing like negative motes of light, he remembered something from his childhood—fifty years ago, or more. He and his brother had come upon a huge nest of ground wasps just north of their farm. It had been tucked into a hollow between the earth and an old lightning-basted tree. His brother had had a big old nigger-chaser in the band of his hat, saved all the way from the Fourth of July. He had lighted it and tossed it at the nest. It had exploded with a loud bang, and an angry rising hum—almost a low shriek—had risen from the basted nest. They had run away as if demons had been at their heels. In a way, Halorann supposed that demons had been. And looking back over his shoulder, as he was now, he had on that day seen a large dark cloud of hornets rising in the hot air, swirling together, breaking apart, looking for whatever enemy had done this to their home so that they—the single group intelligence—could sting it to death.

Then the thing in the sky was gone and it might only have been smoke or a great flapping swatch of wall paper after all, and there was only the Overlook, a flaming pyre in the roaring throat of the night.

* * *

There was a key to the equipment, shed's padlock on his key ring, but Halorann saw there would be no need to use it. The door was ajar, the padlock hanging open on its hasp.

"I can't go in there," Danny whispered.

"That's okay. You stay with your mom. There used to be a pile of old horseblankets. Probably all moth-eaten by now, but better than freezin' to death. Missus Torrance, you sit down."

"I don't know," the wan voice answered. "I think so."

"Good. I'll be just a second."

"Come back as quick as you can," Danny whispered. "Please."

Halorann looked. He had trained the headlamp on the door

and now he bounded through the snow, casting a long shadow in front of himself. He pushed the equipment shed door open and stepped in. The horseblankets were still in the corner by the rogue set. He picked up four of them—they smelled musty and old and the moths certainly had been having a free lunch—and then he paused.

One of the rogue mallets was gone.

(Was that what he hit me with?)

Well, it didn't matter what he'd been hit with, did it? Still, his fingers went to the side of his face and began to explore the huge lump there. Six hundred dollars' worth of dental work undone at a single blow. And after all

(maybe he didn't hit me with one of those. Maybe one got lost Or stolen. Or took for a souvenir. After all)

it didn't really matter. No one was going to be playing rogue here next summer. Or any summer in the foreseeable future.

No, it didn't really matter, except that looking at the racked mallets with the single missing member had a kind of fascination. He found himself thinking of the hard wooden *whack* of the mallet head striking the round wooden ball. A nice summery sound. Watching it skitter across the

(bone blood)

gravel. It conjured up images of

(bone, blood)

iced tea, porch swings, ladies in white straw hats, the hum of mosquitoes, and

(bad little boys who don't play by the rules)

all that stuff. Sure. Nice game. Out of style now, but . . . nice.

"Dick?" The voice was thin, frantic, and, he thought, rather unpleasant. "Are you all right, Dick? Come on now. *Pleuse*."

('Come on out now niggah de massa callin youah!')

His hand closed tightly around one of the mallet handles, liking its feel.

(Spare the rod, spoil the child.)

His eyes went blank in the flickering, fire-shot darkness. Really, it would be doing them both a favor. She was messed up . . . in pain . . . and most of all

(all of it)

was that damn boy's fault. Sure. He had left his own daddy in there to burn. When you thought of it, it was damn close to murder. Patricide was what they called it. Pretty goddam low.

"Mr. Haljorann? Her voice was low, weak, querulous. He didn't much like the sound of it.

Dick! The boy was sobbing now, in terror.

Haljorann drew the mallet from the rack and turned toward the flood of white light from the snowmobile headlamp. His feet scratched unevenly over the boards of the equipment shed, like the feet of a clockwork toy that has been wound up and set in motion.

Suddenly he stopped, looked wonderingly at the mallet in his hands, and asked himself with rising horror what it was he had been thinking of doing. Murder? *Has he been thinking of murder?*

For a moment his entire mind seemed filled with an angry, weakly hectoring voice.

(Do it! Do it, you weak kneed no-balls nigger! Kill them. KILL THEM BOTH!)

Then he flung the mallet behind him with a whispered, terrified cry. It clattered into the corner where the horse blankets had been. One of the two heads pointed toward him in an unspeakable invitation.

He fled.

Danny was sitting on the snowmobile seat and Wendy was holding him weakly. His face was shiny with tears, and he was shaking as if with ague. Between his clacking teeth he said: "Where were you? We were scared?"

"It's a good place to be scared of," Haljorann said slowly. "Even if that place burns flat to the foundation, you'll never get me within a hundred miles of here again. Here. Missus Torrance, wrap these around you. I'll help. You too, Danny. Get yourself looking like an Arab."

He swirled two of the blankets around Wendy, fastening one of them into a hood to cover her head, and helped Danny tie his so they wouldn't fall off.

"Now hold on for dear life," he said. "We got a long way to go, but the worst is behind us now."

He circled the equipment shed and then pointed the snowmobile back along their trail. The Overlook was a torch now, flaming

at the sky. Great holes had been eaten into its sides, and there was a red hell inside, waxing and waning. Snowmelt ran down the charred gutters in steaming waterfalls.

They purred down the front lawn, like r way well in. The snow-dunes glowed scarlet.

"Look," Danny shouted as Haliorann slowed for the front gate. He was pointing toward the playground.

The hedge creatures were all in their original positions, but they were denuded, blackened, seared. Their dead branches were a stark interesting network in the fireglow, their small leaves scattered around the r feet like fallen petals.

"They're dead!" Danny screamed in hysterical triumph. *Dead! They're dead!*

"Shhh," Wendy said. "All right, honey. It's all right."

"Hey, doc," Haliorann said. "Let's go to someplace warm. You ready?"

"Yes," Danny whispered. "I've been ready for so long."

Haliorann edged through the gap between gate and post. A moment later they were on the road, pointed back toward Sidewinder. The sound of the snowmobile's engine dwindled until it was lost in the ceaseless roar of the wind. It railed through the denuded branches of the hedge animals with a low, beating, desolate sound. The fire waxed and waned. Sometime after the sound of the snowmobile's engine had disappeared, the Overlook's roof caved in—first the west wing, then the east, and seconds later the central roof. A huge spiraling gout of sparks and flaming debris rushed up into the howling winter night.

A bundle of flaming shingles and a wad of hot flashing were wafted in through the open equipment shed door by the wind.

After a while the shed began to burn, too.

* * *

They were still twenty miles from Sidewinder when Haliorann stopped to pour the rest of the gas into the snowmobile's tank. He was getting very worried about Wendy Torrance, who seemed to be drifting away from them. It was still so far to go.

"Dick!" Danny cried. He was standing up on the seat, pointing.

"Dick, look! Look there!"

The snow had stopped and a silver-dollar moon had peeked out

through the raftering clouds. Far down the road but coming toward them, coming upward through a series of S-shaped switchbacks, was a pearly chain of lights. The wind dropped for a moment and Halvorann heard the faraway buzzing snarl of snowmobile engines.

Halvorann and Danny and Wendy reached them fifteen minutes later. They had brought extra clothes and brumby and Dr. Edmonds.

And the long darkness was over.

58

EPILOGUE / SUMMER

After he had finished checking over the salads his undersstudy had made and peeked in on the home-baked beans they were using as appetizers this week, Halvorann untied his apron, hung it on a hook, and slipped out the back door. He had maybe forty-five minutes before he had to crank up for dinner in earnest.

The name of this place was the Red Arrow Lodge and it was buried in the western Maine mountains, thirty miles from the town of Rangely. It was a good gig, Halvorann thought. The trade wasn't too heavy, it tipped well and so far there hadn't been a single meal sent back. Not bad at all, considering the season was nearly half over.

He threaded his way between the outdoor bar and the swimming pool (although why anyone would want to use the pool with the lake so handy he would never know), crossed a greensward where a party of four was playing croquet and laughing, and crested a mild ridge. Pines took over here, and the wind souged picaresquely in them, carrying the aroma of fir and sweet resin.

On the other side, a number of cabins with views of the lake were placed discreetly among the trees. The last one was the nicest, and Halvorann had reserved it for a party of two back in April when he had gotten this gig.

The woman was sitting on the porch in a rocking chair, a book in her hands. Halvorann was struck again by the change in her

Part of it was the stiff almost formal way she sat, in spite of her informal surroundings—that was the back brace, of course. She'd had a shattered vertebra as well as three broken ribs and some internal injuries. The back was the slowest healing, and she was still in the brace—hence the formal posture. But the change was more than that. She looked older, and some of the laughter had gone out of her face. Now, as she sat reading her book, Halorann saw a grave sort of beauty there that had been missing on the day he had first met her, some nine months ago. Then she had still been mostly girl. Now she was a woman, a human being who had been dragged around to the dark side of the moon and had come back able to put the pieces back together. But those pieces, Halorann thought, they never fit just the same way again. Never in this world.

She heard his step and looked up, closing her book. "Dick. Hi." She started to rise, and a little grimace of pain crossed her face.

"Nope, don't get up," he said. "I don't stand on no ceremony unless it's white tie and tails."

She smiled as he came up the steps and sat down next to her on the porch.

"How is it going?"

"Pretty fair," he admitted. "You try the shrimp creole tonight. You gonna like it."

"That's a deal."

"Where's Danny?"

"Right down there." She pointed, and Halorann saw a small figure sitting at the end of the dock. He was wearing jeans rodeoed up to the knee and a red-striped shirt. Further out on the calm water, a bobber floated. Every now and then Danny would reel it in, examine the sinker and hook below it, and then toss it out again.

"He's gotten brown," Halorann said.

"Yes. Very brown." She looked at him fondly.

He took out a cigarette, tamped it, lit it. The smoke drifted away lazily in the sunny afternoon. "What about those dreams he's been havin'?"

"Better," Wendy said. "Only one this week. It used to be every night, sometimes two and three times. The explosions. The hedges. And most of all— you know."

"Yeah. He's going to be okay, Wendy."

She looked at him. "What? I wonder."

Halorann nodded. "You and him, you're coming back. Different, maybe, but okay. You ain't what you were, you two, but that ain't necessarily bad."

They were silent for a while, Wendy moving the rocking chair back and forth a little. Halorann with his feet up on the porch rail, smoking. A light breeze came up, pushing its secret way through the pines but barely ruffling Wendy's hair. She had cut it short.

"I've decided to take Al—Mr. Shockley—up on his offer," she said.

Halorann nodded. "It sounds like a good job. Something you could get interested in. When do you start?"

"Right, after Labor Day. When Danny and I leave here, we'll be going right on to Maryland to look for a place. It was really the Chamber of Commerce brochure that convinced me, you know. It looks like a nice town to raise a kid in. And I'd like to be working again before we dig too deeply into the insurance money Jack left. There's still over forty thousand dollars. Enough to send Danny to college with enough left over to get him a start, if it's invested right."

Halorann nodded. "Your mom?"

She looked at him and smiled wanly. "I think Maryland is far enough."

"You won't forget old friends, will you?"

"Danny wouldn't let me. Go on down and see him, he's been waiting all day."

"Well, so have I." He stood up and hitched his cook's whites at the hips. "The two of you are going to be okay," he repeated. "Can't you feel it?"

She looked up at him and this time her smile was warmer. "Yes," she said. She took his hand and kissed it. "Sometimes I think I can."

"The shrimp creole," he said, moving to the steps. "Don't forget."

"I won't."

He walked down the sloping, graveled path that led to the dock and then out along the weather-beaten boards to the end, where Danny sat with his feet in the clear water. Beyond, the lake

widened to mirror the pines along its verge. The terrain was mountainous around here, but the mountains were old, rounded, and crumpled by time. Hallorann fixed them just fine.

"Catchin' much?" Hallorann said, sitting down next to him. He took off one shoe, then the other. With a sigh, he let his feet drop down into the cool water.

"No. But I had a nibbie a little while ago."

"We'll take a boat out tomorrow morning. Got to get out in the middle if you want to catch an entin fish, my boy. Out yonder is where the big ones lay."

"How big?"

Hallorann shrugged. "Oh . . . sharks, marlin, whales, that sort of thing."

"There aren't any whales?"

"No *blue* whales, no. Of course not. These ones here run to no more than eighty feet. Pink whales."

"How could they get here from the ocean?"

Hallorann put a hand on the boy's reddish-gold hair and ruffled it. "They swim upstream, my boy. That's how."

"Really?"

"Really."

They were silent for a time, looking out over the stillness of the lake, Hallorann just thinking. When he looked back at Danny, he saw that his eyes had filled with tears.

Putting an arm around him, he said, "What's this?"

"Nothing," Danny whispered.

"You're missin' your dad, aren't you?"

Danny nodded. "You always know." One of the tears spilled from the corner of his right eye and trickled slowly down his cheek.

"We can't have any secrets," Hallorann agreed. "That's just how it is."

Looking at his pole, Danny said, "Sometimes I wish it had been me. It was my fault. All my fault."

Hallorann said, "You don't like to talk about it around your mom, do you?"

"No. She wants to forget it ever happened. So do I, but—"

"But you can't."

"No."

"Do you need to cry?"

The boy tried to answer, but the words were swallowed in a sob. He leaned his head against Halorann's shoulder and wept. The tears now flooding down his face. Halorann held him and said nothing. The boy would have wished his tears again and again, he knew, and it was Danny's fate that he was still young enough to be able to do that. The tears that heal are also the tears that scald and scourge.

When he had quieted a little, Halorann said, "You're gonna get over this. You don't think you are right now, but you will. You got the shu—"

"I wish I didn't!" Danny choked, his voice still thick with tears. "I wish I didn't have it!"

"But you do," Halorann said quietly. "For better or worse. You didn't get no say, little boy. But the worst is over. You can use it to talk to me when things get rough. And if they get too rough, you just call me and I'll come."

Even if I'm down in Maryland?"

"Even there."

They were quiet, watching Danny's bobber drift around thirty feet out from the end of the dock. Then Danny said, almost too low to be heard, "You'll be my friend?"

"As long as you want me."

The boy held him tight and Halorann hugged him.

"Danny? You listen to me. I'm going to talk to you about it this once and never again this same way. There's some things no six-year-old boy in the world should have to be told, but the way things should be and the way things are hardly ever get together. The world's a hard place, Danny. It don't care. It don't hate you and me, but it don't love us, either. Terrible things happen in the world, and they're things no one can explain. Good people die in bad, painful ways and leave the folks that love them all alone. Sometimes it seems like it's only the bad people who stay healthy and prosper. The world don't love you, but your mamma does and so do I. You are a good boy. You grieve for your daddy, and when you feel you have to cry over what happened to him, you go into a closet or under your covers and cry until it's all out of you again. That's what a good son has to do. But see that you get on. That's your job in this hard world, to keep your love alive and see

that you get on no matter what. Pull your boat together and just go on."

All right," Danny whispered. "I'll come see you again next summer if you want . . . if you don't mind. Next summer I'm going to be seven."

"And I'll be sixty-two. And I'm gonna hug your brains out your ears. But let's finish our summer before we go on to the next."

"Okay." He looked at Halloran. "Duck?"

"Hm?"

"You won't die for a long time, will you?"

"I'm sure not studying on it. Are you?"

"No, sir. I—"

You got a bite, sonny. He pointed. The red and white bobber had ducked under. It came up again gasping, and then went under again.

"Hey!" Danny gulped.

Wendy had come down and now joined them, standing in back of Danny. "What is it?" she asked. "Pickete?"

"No, ma'am," Halloran said. "I believe that's a pink whale."

The tip of the fishing rod bent. Danny pulled it back and a long fish, rainbow-colored, flashed up in a sunny, wringing parabola, and disappeared again.

Danny reeled frantically, gasping.

"Help me, Duck! I got him! I got him! Help me!"

Halloran laughed. "You're gonna live all by yourself little man. I don't know if it's a pink whale or a trout, but it'll do. It'll do just fine."

He put an arm around Danny's shoulders and the boy reeled the fish in. Little by little Wendy sat down on Danny's other side and the three of them sat on the end of the dock in the afternoon sun.

growing more and more frightening. But it was only when Daddy had taken the caretaker job at the Overlook Hotel that Danny wished he didn't have to have the power of the shine. Now there were only the three of them, Daddy, Mummy and Danny, in the big hotel, for everyone else had gone away and it was closed for the winter. When the snow came they would be cut off from the outside world. Mr Halloran had said not to worry about the things he'd see — that they were just like nasty pictures in a book and couldn't harm him — but then Danny began to recognise them as the visions that Tony had shown him. Somewhere, somehow, behind the palatial suites and banqueting halls of the Overlook there dwelt an evil mind that had begun to shine.

By the author of *Carrie* and *'Salem's Lot*, *The Shining* will open the door into a world of unimaginable horror. You have the key.



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